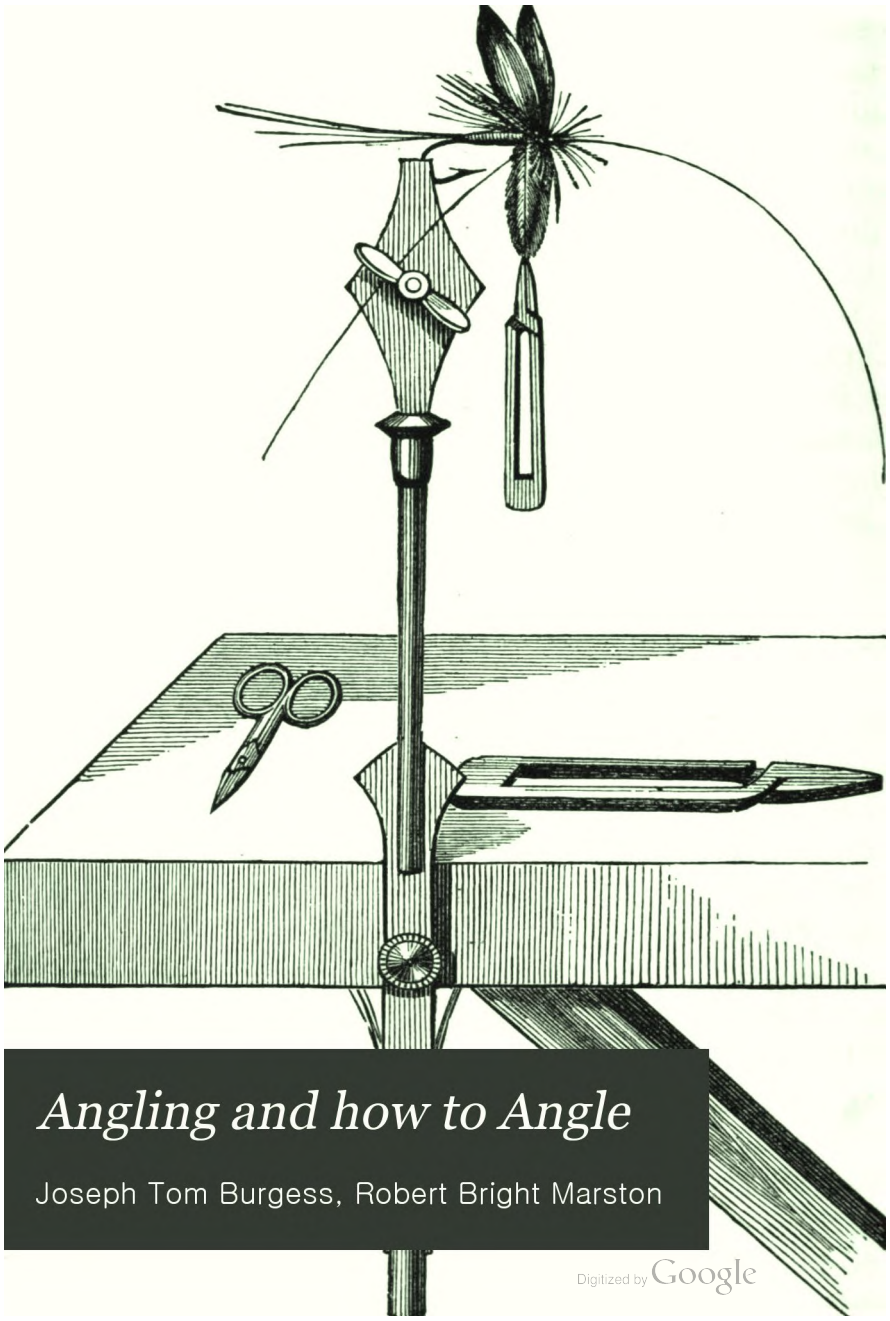

Angling and how to Angle

Joseph Tom Burgess, Robert Bright Marston

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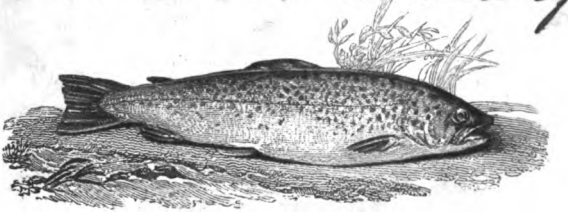
with the best wishes of



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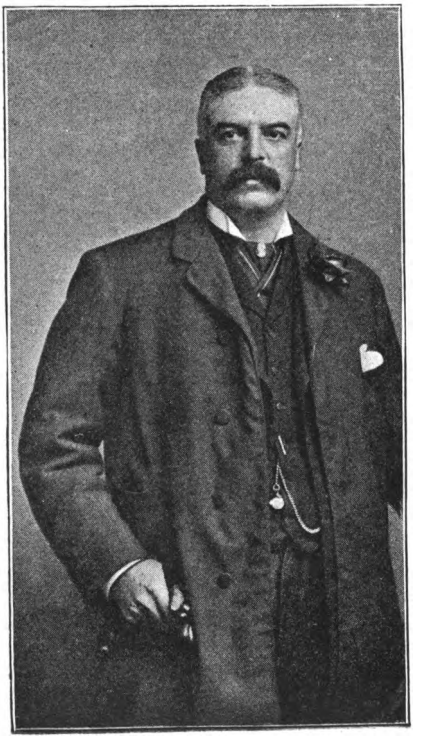

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A PRACTICAL GUIDE

TO BAIT-FISHING, TROLLING, SPINNING

AND FLY-FISHING

By J. T. BURGESS

AUTHOR OF "OLD ENGLISH WILD FLOWERS," ETC.

REVISED AND BROUGHT DOWN TO DATE

By R. B. MARSTON

EDITOR OF "THE FISHING GAZETTE."

WITH A SPECIAL ARTICLE ON PIKE-FISHING

By A. J. JARDINE

WITH UPWARDS OF SEVENTY DIAGRAMS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

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AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THERE are thousands of people who love a day's fishing, but who have neither the time nor the inclination to make a profound study of the gentle craft. They are often dispirited and disappointed at their want of success. They have sighed for a comprehensive, practical, yet handy manual, which is neither too large for the pocket, nor too brief to be useful.

Perhaps no outdoor sport has so large or so fine a literature as angling. So full and exhaustive are the various treatises, that it appears presumptuous to place another volume on the already loaded shelves of the fisherman's library. If anglers all belonged to the rich and leisurely grades of society, I should certainly not have expanded my rough fishing-notes into a book.

Though I have embodied my own experiences into these pages, I have not overlooked the advice of my brother anglers, when I found on trial that their plans were more simple, or, practically, more useful than my own. The most striking instance of this being the case, was in trolling and spinning for pike; and I acknowledge my indebtedness for many a good day's sport to the improved tackle and hints of Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell. To him, and to those kind

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friends who furnished me with valuable memoranda, I tender my hearty thanks.

I would direct attention to the tried recipes, as well as to the practical hints on the making and mending of fishing gear, fly-dressing, and odd memoranda, which will be duly appreciated by those who have experienced the chagrin of tackle breaking in the midst of a day's sport, or their stock of flies exhausted far away from the usual sources of supply. A little ingenuity and patience will soon bring the necessary skill and neatness to do these things well.

Though these things have been described ostensibly for the guidance and instruction of the young and inexperienced angler, I am not without hope that it will be found sufficiently valuable, and full of suggestive practical hints, as to commend itself to many an old angler as a necessary part of his outfit.

J. T. B.

LEAMINGTON, *May* 1867.

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EDITOR'S NOTE

HAVING been requested by the publishers to revise this book, I have tried to do so, I hope, as Mr. Burgess himself would have done it, and with a tender regard for his pleasant little work. As will be seen from the date of the Preface, nearly thirty years have passed since it was written. In that time some changes in the art of angling itself and numberless improvements, or so-called improvements, have been made in fishing rods and tackle of all kinds.

In the many additions I have made, my object has been to carry on the Author's idea and to make the information and instructions as simple and practical as possible. Many of the old illustrations have been replaced by new ones of more modern tackle, and the old list of dressings of artificial flies has been revised and supplemented by others giving the standard patterns now in use. I have added some account of the comparatively new and most fascinating style of fly-fishing known as "Dry-fly Fishing," and also of other branches not included in the original work.

Having all my life been an ardent lover of all styles of fair angling, I hope that this revised edition of "Angling" may be the means of putting many a young angler in the

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right way to become a skilful one, and shall be thankful for any correction of errors that may be found in it.

I have to thank my friends, Mr. Alfred J. Jardine and Mr. Francis M. Walbran, for kindly giving me special articles for this edition. Mr. Jardine writes on "Pike Fishing," Mr. Walbran on "North Country Flies" and "Creeper Fishing."

R. B. MARSTON.

St. Dunstan's House,
Fetter Lane, London.
July 1895.

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ANGLING

CHAPTER I

ANGLING AND ANGLERS

WHO can adequately describe the pleasures that surround the angler? Who can catalogue the charms that cling around his pursuit? He pursues his avocation amid scenes of natural beauty. It is he who follows the windings of the silvery river, and becomes acquainted with its course. He knows the joyous leaps it takes down the bold cascade, and how it bubbles rejoicingly in its career over the rapids. He knows the solitude of its silent depths, and the brilliancy of its shallows. He is confined to no season. He can salute Nature when she laughs with the budding flowers, and when her breath is the glorious breath of Spring. The rustling sedges make music in his ear ere the mist has rolled off the surface of the water, or the dew been kissed from the grass by the sun's rays. The lark sings for him; from bush and brake he hears sweet bird-notes. The gorgeous king fisher heeds him not, and the water-hen scarce moves from her nest as he passes. The storm and the tempest scarcely hinder his sport. He throws his line when ruddy Autumn gilds the western heavens, and the fruit of the year hangs heavy on the bough, or waves in golden abundance on the uplands. Even stern Winter does not forbid him his

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enjoyment. If he cares to pursue his favourite pastime, he may do so as well when the tall bulrushes, wavy reeds, and reedmace rattle with December's winds, as when the marsh-marigold opes its big yellow eyes on an April day, or the tall spike of the purple loosestrife mingles with the creamy hue of the meadowsweet, and is relieved by the sombre green of the sedges. If he is an ardent sportsman, the whole year is before him. When the trout will not rise to the tempting fly, or be seduced by the seductive bait, the voracious pike will seize the spinning minnow and try the patience and skill of the fisherman.

I fancy that few anglers care for that smattering of science which too many modern writers throw over the sport. They are somewhat indifferent to the "Rudiments of Ichthyology," and are heedless of the classification which their spoil might receive in a museum. They rather want to know the habits of the fish, where he is to be found, the state of his appetite, and the particular variety of his taste at different seasons of the year, and in different waters. They may know but little of entomology; but they know the attractiveness of a May-fly to a trout. Anglers study natural history in a natural way, and in the best school—that of experience; and hence the Englishman becomes not only one of the best and keenest of sportsmen, but almost the apostle of sport in every part of the globe.

What a host of names rise up in connection with the sport! Sir Walter Scott, Washington, Sir Humphry Davy, the inventor of the safety-lamp, and the author of a pleasant treatise on fly-fishing; Archdeacon Paley, the author of the "Evidences of Christianity"; burly Daniel Webster; Nelson, England's beloved hero; John Bright, Lord Randolph Churchill, Anthony Froude, and a thousand others whose names are "household words" for wit, learning, valour, piety, and truth, suggest themselves as identified with the sport.

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Neither is the love of it confined to the British Isles; great numbers of our American cousins are keen and clever anglers. Among our countrymen all over the world the angler is well represented, and among Continental nations the art has made great progress of late years. A friend speaks of the sport he had on the Guadalquiver; another has "whipped" an Alpine stream with success. Wherever trout are to be found, there will the fisherman be. The Church took care of fishing-grounds in the Middle Ages, and some of the best streams and lakes I know are near the ruins of an old abbey or priory.

Who can say that it is, then, an ignoble sport? I have seen it asserted that angling is so quiet, gentle, and contemplative, that I picture at once the snaring of sticklebacks with a crooked pin; or a dull afternoon in a punt, without a bite—discovering after a world of patience that you have forgotten the bait. Ignoble and unexciting! Let those who have felt the thrill of delight, when standing waist-deep in the rushing salmon-river they have hooked a magnificent salmon, answer. There is a tapering, flexible rod, a fine gut-line, a small fly, and a trial of skill which generally ends in the triumph of the angler. But if he is clumsy, unskilful, or careless, he loses his pains and his fish. There may be more exciting sports, but none that require a quicker eye, a more delicate hand and sense of touch, readiness of resource, activity, and physical endurance. Large fish are often caught with tackle which seems too frail to secure a gudgeon; yet it is done by art and skill. The most active of river-fish, bounding, vigorous, and agile, succumb to the untiring patience and well-exercised judgment and skill of the angler. Attempt to use rude strength, and your labour is in vain.

I wish to initiate the beginner into this marvellous art. I wish to give him confidence in his strength and knowledge;

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for, although it is impossible to teach an art entirely by a book, much may be learned from it. The lessons of experience may be acquired, so that practice, when attainable, may not be thrown away in vain attempts, but rather that it should be judiciously applied to the given end, preventing waste of time and disappointment of heart. I shall indicate the best methods to adopt, and show what shallows to avoid. He will find glorious companionship by the rivers and the streams. He will be separated from the toilsome, hard-breathing, hard-working world, drinking in visions of beauty amid scenes which will remain ever after amongst the most cherished memories of the heart.

There is something fair and honourable in the "gentle craft," whether practised in still waters in the primitive, honest, and easy fashion of float-fishing or ledgering—whether by the more active exercise of trolling, or the most difficult but most glorious fly-fishing—whether natural or artificial insects are used—whether spinning or trolling with live, dead, or artificial bait in mid-water, or using seductive worms, gentles, or paste near the river-bottom. Fish are not easily entrapped by the uninitiated. Skill and experience must be brought into play ere the angler can fill his creel, and these must be aided by no little study and observation.

The fly-fisher must be in a certain sense an artist and a naturalist. He has to represent as best he can, by means of different substances of varied delicacy, tissue, and colour, insects of the most diverse forms and changeable hues. He must do his work with the most perfect neatness. He must know well the outward form of many varieties of insects, their habits and localities, as well as the seasons in which they live and die. He should know which is likely to prove the most attractive food for the fish he angles for, and when to use it. Every kind and species ought to be associated in his mind with the proper place and the proper season. To

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do this well requires no little experience, which I will help him to attain, and then he will be able to appreciate the truth of the doctrine, "the better angler the better man."

CHAPTER II

FISH: THEIR SENSES AND TASTES

ERE he can capture a fish, the inexperienced angler will find that he has much to learn; for though fish may be deficient in sensation, they can see, hear, and move with remarkable quickness.

The eye of a fish is usually large in proportion to its size, and embraces a very wide angle of vision. It concentrates the diffused light of a thick medium in a remarkable manner. Hence it is necessary that the angler should not only keep out of sight as much as possible, but that his attire should be of a dark and sober tint. Not only must he beware of his shadow falling on the water, but he must know to some extent the laws of reflection and refraction, or he will be unconsciously showing his image to the fish whilst pluming himself on his skill in keeping out of sight. Hence a cloudy day is so much superior to the brilliant sunshine for the purposes of the angler. The sight of fishes is one of their highest sentient endowments; so that the aim of the angler must be to keep himself out of sight and his tackle as invisible as possible.

I resided for some time in the neighbourhood of a pond where the fish were accustomed to being fed. I could never discover whether it was the sight of the feeder on the brink, or the sound of his footstep, that first attracted them. They were so fearless that they boldly came to the water's edge, and apparently unable to recognise whether it was their master or a stranger feeding them. A hurried tramp

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or noisy footstep at once sent them flying to the deeper depths of their narrow home. I am inclined to think that the hearing of fish is more acute than naturalists say is possible, or at any rate that they are very sensitive to vibrations. A lump of ground-bait, however loud the splash, will not disturb them; and they soon seem to associate the noise with the food; but an unusual sound will scare them like sheep before a strange dog. No one can resist the inference, that the footstep of the angler should be as light as possible, and all unusual sounds should be carefully avoided.

Do fish smell? Natural bait-fishers are peculiarly interested in this question. They, like the fly-fishers, are somewhat dependent for sport on the presumption that fish are gifted with a discriminating power of sight; but they also hold, according to the traditions of their predecessors, that not only can fish smell, but that their olfactory nerves are remarkably acute; and acting on this presumption, we have scented and coloured pastes in great variety. Erasmus Wilson places the sense of sight first, hearing second, and smell third in fish. Indeed, he almost insinuates that the difference between one bait and another, if equally attractive to the eye, would be scarcely perceptible. Judging from a long experience, I am inclined to place the sense of smell in a higher rank than that of hearing, practically, if not anatomically. The water, it is true, cannot course through the valvular openings which appear to serve as nostrils, and it has to be expelled through the apertures provided for that purpose, but they are always in motion; and the membrane and nerve are most beautiful and delicate for conveying the impression to the brain. Odours spread with great rapidity down a stream, and fish will assemble from a great distance to a well-baited spot. Mr. Moffat tells an anecdote of eel-fishing, which is, no doubt, true to the letter, of the attraction of some large lob-worms on a dark night to

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the fish, which seemed to have come from a long distance, attracted by the sense of smell. Asafœtida is said to have a peculiar attractiveness to tench; as much, indeed, as valerian has to cats, or aniseed for rats. From whatever cause it arises, a plain paste is not near so effective a bait as when a little gin-and-honey is added. Mr. Moffat evidently does not believe in gin, though the Midland bait-fishers do. Let the angler for chub or roach try both plans. Let the troller try the same stream with a fresh fish and a stale one; let the perch-fisher try a dead worm and then a live one; or let him set his trimmers with both fresh and stale baits, and he will find that one is taken and the other left. I was much struck with the discriminating power of fish in this respect when fishing for hake off the coast of Waterford. We had no regular bait, which is a piece off the tail of the fish, but had to content ourselves with some pieces of salted fish, herrings and sprats. The promise of sport was not very brilliant, though we knew that the fish were there, and could hear the dull heavy thud from the neighbouring boats as the fish were struck on the back of the head with the boat-stretcher. We toiled, but in vain, until a bold ling seized my bait, and was speedily in the boat, killed, and strips of his tail on our hooks, three fathoms deep. Then we were rewarded. The fresh baits were greedily taken, and we secured half a boat-load of fine fish. An old Nottinghamshire angler, to whom, when a boy, I was indebted for many valuable hints, told me that, when fishing in the Trent, he used to meet an old collier, who was not only a most successful angler, but one who could lure the fish on to his hook when everybody else failed. This naturally excited the curiosity of the neighbouring fishermen; and as the taciturnity of the collier equalled his skill, they resolved to find out his secret. They watched him, and found that his pastes were coloured and

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scented; but with what? After an investigation not much unlike espionage, they discovered that a variety of essential oils, saffron, and balsam of Tolu entered into the composition of the old man's pastes, and that he changed them month by month to suit the varying appetite of the fish he angled for. As balsam of Tolu is sweet, aromatic, and of a lemon-flavour, it *might* be tempting to the piscine palate, or attractive by its scent, which, by the addition of a little potash, changes to the odour of clove-pink.

Fish are so apt to adapt themselves to the particular water and circumstances around them, both in colour and food, that one bait will not serve for all waters nor for all seasons. The angler must study somewhat the water he is fishing in, its colour and general appearance, and adapt his gear accordingly; remembering that unusual sounds disturb the fish, and the lashing of the water with the line, letting it hang in links or hanks, will all operate against his success. The fish must not be alarmed by the sight of the angler or his shadow; neither must his footstep be heavy, nor his song too loud. If he would profit by his higher intelligence, let him not outrage common sense, but remember how often instinct is higher than reason, and that the instinct and senses of a fish are not the meanest in the animal creation.

CHAPTER III

THE ROD AND THE REEL

Of course the angler must have a rod, and on the choice of one he can exercise his taste, for they are as varied in size, weight, material, pliancy, and price as the most fastidious could wish. Any tackle-dealer will be only "too happy" to satisfy the heart's desire of the young angler, who, however, should know what he requires.

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The rod for float-fishing should be strong and light, stiff enough to strike a fish quickly, and sufficiently springy to equalise the pressure from top to butt. Though it need not be so supple as that used for fly-fishing, it should taper with equal precision from the butt to the top. The length depends upon whether it is to be used from a boat or punt, or from a bank. The length of a bank-rod should vary with the nature of the fishing. In some instances a twenty-foot rod would not be too long, while about ten or twelve feet would be sufficient when fishing from a punt, or for spinning or fishing in the Nottingham style, or ledgering. If furnished with two or three spare tops of different degrees of stiffness and length it becomes a "general rod," and may be used for nearly every purpose. For roach and dace fishing, the rod must be so light and so perfectly under command as to enable the angler to "strike" with an almost imperceptible turn of the wrist.

With respect to the material. If you purchase your rod, as ninety-nine out of a hundred do, you will have plenty of choice. You may have them of cane, ash, lancewood, or greenheart, according to price and finish; but let it be handy, light, well balanced and supple. Never have your rod in more than four lengths, nor if possible exceed three. One of three lengths with a hollow butt in which to place two or three top-pieces, will be found the best for all general purposes. It may be fitted with a spike at the bottom, ringed and fitted with winch fittings for reels for trolling and fly-fishing.

Exclusive of hazel, the woods ordinarily used in the manufacture of rods, are three or four varieties of bamboo, cane, ash, greenheart, hickory, and lancewood. The first time I saw greenheart as a portion of a rod was in Limerick, and there I found greenheart has of late years come into general use for fly and spinning rods, and if of good quality and well seasoned is so reliable and has such a steel-like

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spring as to be preferred by many anglers even to the most perfect split cane, though so greatly have these been improved of late years that many of the best fly-fishermen think no rod equal to a "Hardy" or "Walbran" split cane. Mr. James Ogden, of 28 Winchcomb Street, Cheltenham, is now introducing a new wood for rods, called "steelwood," said to be lighter, tougher, and stronger than greenheart. Mr. Ogden is himself a keen fly-fisher and deserves the thanks of anglers for many useful inventions; his "steelwood" seems to have a great future before it.

Messrs. Gillett and Son, of Fetter Lane, London, make excellent "whole cane" fly-rods, and are now introducing a new kind of cane rod. The "whole cane" fly-rods made by Ogden Smith, of St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction, are also first-class. Greenheart, although heavier than hickory, keeps its shape better, and combines strength, fineness, and elasticity in a remarkable degree. I have seen pine used for the butt of some old rods, made when hollow butts were unknown. It is still used largely in the manufacture of the thicker halves of bottom and spinning rods, especially in the Midlands.

The joints of the rod ought to be looked to carefully before the purchase is completed, particularly if the rod is made of reed or cane. In order to give an extra finish and evenness to the rod, the workman sometimes cuts away a part of the bark or hard outer covering of the cane, to fit on the ferrule, so that the rod is not only weaker where it ought to be strongest, but it is liable to rot from the impossibility of preventing the wet from getting in at the joints. So often have the ordinary brass joints failed the angler in the moment of his need, from this and other causes, that the

SPLICED ROD finds much favour with those who live in the country near the waters they fish. As many an ingenious youth would like to try to make his own rod, I will

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endeavour to explain the construction of two good rods which are within the reach of any country youth. They are simple and inexpensive, though somewhat rude in construction. Select a number of pieces of straight hazel, of different thicknesses, in the fall of the year, when the sap is gone, and place them in any convenient place to dry; Juliana Berners says an oven, but that plan is hardly to be recommended nowadays. They should, however, be turned frequently, to prevent their warping or drying irregularly. In the course of a year, or less, if the place is warm and dry, the pieces may be matched together in proportionate sizes. From the top of the thinnest cut eight or ten inches, and bind on a taper piece of whalebone with waxed thread—such as is used by saddlers is the best for the purpose. The whalebone may be cut with a long slant, to suit a corresponding slant in the hazel, or slightly split and made to overlap a tapering point. The butt and middle piece, and top, may be joined together by a long splice. If intended to remain together for the season, some saddler's wax may be rubbed between the joints, which are then neatly bound with strong waxed thread. Every angler should learn to bind a splice with neatness and adroitness, in case of accident to his rod when in a remote district. The waxed silk or cord should be neatly and closely laid together, and the ends should be securely fastened. To fasten off, lay the forefinger of your left hand over the bind, and with your right make three or four turns of the thread over it, then pass the end of your thread between the under side of your finger and the rod, and draw your finger away, draw taut each of the four threads separately, and when firm and tight, draw the end close, and you have a neatly and firmly tied splice. When, however, the rod is to be taken asunder day by day, a closely stitched leather band is wetted and drawn tightly over the splice, and then whipped with twine, and as the

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leather dries it becomes tight and firm. This forms a light, useful rod. A piece of lancewood may be cheaply and judiciously substituted for the spliced top for bottom-fishing, and the butt may be made of yellow pine.

A useful rod for fly-fishing may be made in the above manner, of ash for the butt, hickory for the middle piece, and lancewood or greenheart for the top, or it may be made in two pieces, the bottom of ash and the top of lancewood. The rings should not be too close together, nor the reel too heavy. Some curious calculations have been made with respect to the rings of a rod, so as to equally divide the strain, and by the whippings add strength to the rod. The reel should be placed near the end of the butt in single-handed rods—six to eight inches will be found a convenient distance. From a dozen to sixteen rings may be used, according to the length of the rod, the first of which may be placed eighteen inches from the reel, and the next twelve inches, decreasing in proportion until the end loop is reached. The last ring should be about four inches from the loop, and a longer distance on each side of the ferrule. In a spliced rod, the allowance to be made for the joints need not be so great. These general hints will be sufficient for all practical purposes. Mr. Moffat, in the "Secrets of Angling," attaches great importance to these minutiæ. The first ring in a thirteen-feet rod with four joints, he says, should be seventeen inches from the reel, which is to be placed $8\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the butt. The rings are then placed apart in the following order:—$12\frac{1}{2}$, $17\frac{1}{2}$, 10, $11\frac{1}{2}$, 15, $8\frac{1}{2}$, 9, 9, $7\frac{1}{2}$, 10, $4\frac{3}{4}$, $4\frac{1}{2}$, $5\frac{1}{2}$, $5\frac{1}{2}$, leaving the loop $3\frac{1}{2}$, from the last ring. I cannot attach much importance to these measurements, which to be effective must depend on the material of which the rod is made. It is far more important to have the rings of a good shape, that known as the "Snake" ring, made of steel, is one of the best; the top ring at the end of the rod

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should always be a revolving steel one if possible, as it saves the line from friction.

There are several varieties of fancy rods sold in the shape of bag-rods and walking-stick rods. These can only be recommended from their portability. The former are made in about two-feet lengths, so that they may be packed in a portmanteau, or carried in a pocket. They are usually of cane or other light material, and are useful for light fishing in small streams. The walking-stick rod used to be a great favourite with some fishermen. It is made of bamboo, and the joints fit into one another in the same manner as a telescope. A handle screws into the upper end, and a ferrule to the lower, so that it may be used as a walking-stick. I cannot recommend the young angler to outlay his money in so fancy an article.

The *price* of rods varies from sixpence to several guineas. A good useful rod may be bought for a few shillings. Rods should be kept in a canvas bag; and as damp is their great enemy they should always be wiped dry before being put away. If they have been much used during the season they ought to be re-varnished. For this purpose coachmaker's varnish (copal) is the best. Two coats are required, and the first should be dry ere the last is laid on. If copal varnish is not to be had, an excellent substitute may be thus made: Spirits of wine, 2 oz.; orange shellac, 1 oz.; gum benjamin, ¼ oz. The mixture must stand a fortnight before using. Another recipe is as follows:—Gum sandarac, 4 oz.; shellac, 2 oz.; gum benjamin, 1 oz.; spirits of wine, 2 pints. When dissolved add two ounces of Venice turpentine. Dragon's blood will give it a warm red tone; Vandyke brown a rich brown colour; black sealing-wax, dissolved in spirits of wine, will make a fair black varnish. In the absence of varnish of any kind, the rod may be rubbed over with *boiled* linseed (drying) oil. The practice of

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painting rods, as recommended by Izaak Walton, is seldom followed now, and cannot be recommended as a process for preserving rods from the attacks of insects or damp.

The ferrules and joints of an ordinary rod call for some remark. Common rods are fitted with brass ferrules, into which the end of the upper joint fits. When the latter is of plain wood it is apt to swell by exposure to damp or rain, or shrivel and shrink in the heat of the sun or a dry wind, and, consequently, likely to come asunder at the most critical time. No joints are to be trusted but those which have turned brass sockets and brass tips to fit them. "Lock-fast" joints of various designs are now in general use. Should the brass joints become "set," by damp or other causes, they may be released by turning them in the flame of a candle or lamp; and even the varnish may be preserved by twining a piece of writing-paper round the joint previously.

The REEL, or WINCH, may be considered as almost an integral part of the fishing-rod, for it is useful in all kinds of fishing and indispensable in many. The characteristics of a good reel are lightness, strength, and simplicity. There are several varieties in use made to suit different styles of fishing. The majority of reels now in general use are made of wood, ebonite, brass, or aluminium, or a combination of these materials. Multiplying reels (*i.e.*, reels in which by means of cog-wheels one turn of the handle makes the barrel turn twice or more) are much used in America, but anglers in this country as a rule prefer plain reels with a check of some kind, and with a narrow deep barrel, which, offering a large surface to wind on, takes the line in much more quickly than a broad barrel of smaller diameter. The young angler should bear this in mind when buying a reel, because the narrow, deep reel, although it may not hold any more line than a broader and shallower one, will wind in line twice as fast and much more evenly. The great drawback of a reel without a

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check of some kind is that of giving out the line with too great rapidity, and overrunning, and thereby choking itself, and endangering the loss of the fish at a critical period by a sudden check; this has been remedied by a "check" contrivance which, while it allows the line to run out freely when

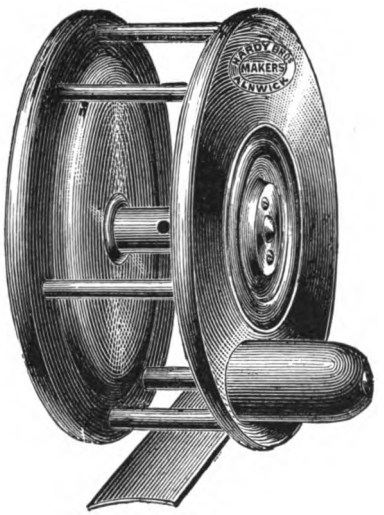

FIG. 1.—Illustration of a Modern Brass or Ebonite Reel, with handle on reel-plate. (An illustration of an ordinary Nottingham reel is given in Mr, Jardine's article on Pike Fishing, see p. 94.)

required, prevents the too rapid action of the reel when the strain has gone. This is effected in several ways—one by a tooth working with a spring in a ratchet-wheel, another by a friction-plate or washer. It is simply a plate of thin steel or brass, a little less than the diameter of the reel, made slightly convex, with a hole in the centre and slit in half a dozen places to about one-third of its diameter. This plate is placed between the back plate and the revolving part of

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the reel. The best reels are those in which the handle is fixed in the revolving side-plate, as by this contrivance the ugly and tormenting crank is dispensed with. The "Nottingham Reel" has been greatly improved of late years;

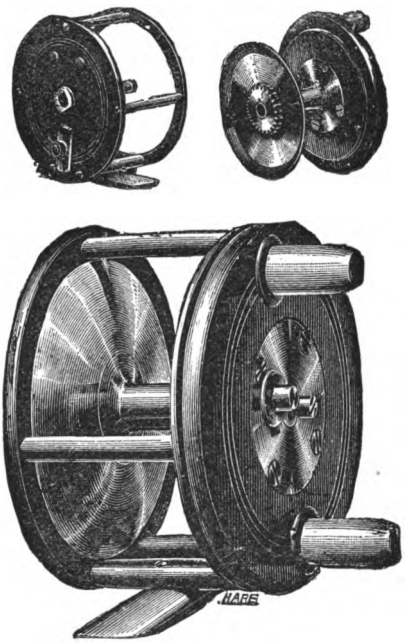

FIG. 2.—Slater's "Combination Nottingham and Ordinary Reel." *

the "Combination Nottingham and Ordinary Reel," invented by Mr. David Slater of Newark-on-Trent, is now in general use for all kinds of fishing. The youngest angler need scarcely be told that the use of the reel is to hold the running line for the purpose of playing a fish.

* By pressing a spring this reel can be taken apart to be cleaned and oiled as shown in the above illustration.

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CHAPTER IV

THE LINE, TACKLE, AND EQUIPMENT OF AN ANGLER

IMPORTANT and useful as a well-balanced and carefully constructed rod is to the angler, he is more dependent on his line and hooks for success than on the rod to which they are attached. His rod may be rough, ill-fashioned, a mere switch, or a washerwoman's line-prop, and yet not prove fatal to his sport; but an ill-conditioned line or a badly tempered hook will spoil all. Even the beautifully finished, tapering, silver-mounted rod will not compensate for defective gut or a brittle hook. The skilful cast, the well-timed stroke, the judicious playing of the fish, are thrown away by the snapping of a piece of steel or the sudden parting of a fine line.

FISHING LINES are made of a variety of substances, including horsehair, silk, hemp, cotton,* either separately or mixed, from six feet to one hundred yards long, and in fineness from a single horsehair to a clothes-line. Waterproofed *plaited* silk lines are the best and can be bought in all degrees of thickness. The reel-line for fly-fishing should be double-tapered.

For the two or three yards next to the hook fine horsehair or gut is used The latter is more common, because it can be obtained in greater lengths, and of more uniform consistency, and of varied strength and thickness. Silkworm gut is manufactured in Spain by a process which is briefly and clearly described in Ure's *Dictionary of Arts and Manufactures*. *Good* silkworm gut is evenly round like wire, silky, bright and colourless. The *thickest* and *longest* is most

* The salmon and trout lines made by the Manchester Cotton Twine Spinning Co. are cheap and very good. N.B.—A twisted line should not be used for spinning.

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in request for salmon-fishing, and such quality is scarce. *Fine* is also in great demand. The article is usually put up in little bundles of 100 threads each, and these again in tens. Select a number of the best and largest silkworms, just when they are beginning to spin, which is known by their refusing to eat, and having a fine silk thread hanging from their mouths. Immerse them in strong vinegar, and cover them closely for twelve hours, if the weather be warm, but two or three hours longer, if it be cool. When taken out, and pulled asunder, two transparent guts will be observed, of a yellow-green colour, as thick as a small straw, bent double. The rest of the entrails resembles boiled spinach, and therefore can occasion no mistake as to the silk gut. If this be soft, or break upon stretching it, it is a proof that the worm has not been long enough under the influence of the vinegar. When the gut is fit to draw out, the one end of it is to be dipped into the vinegar, and the other end is to be stretched gently to the proper length. When thus drawn out, it must be kept extended on a thin piece of board, by putting its extremities into slits in the end of the wood, or fastening them to pins, and then exposed in the sun to dry. Thus genuine silk gut is made in Spain. From the manner in which it is dried the ends are always more or less compressed or attenuated. Good gut should be *naturally* round, thin and transparent. I say naturally, because there is in use a little machine, like a wire-drawer's gauge, for reducing the diameter of gut and rounding its flat and angular edges. This is useful to a certain extent, but the gut so prepared is decidedly inferior to undrawn gut—if the latter can be obtained as fine. Some gut is white and glossy; this should be avoided, as it is more easily seen. To obviate this disadvantage as far as possible the gut must be stained. To do this properly it must be moistened, and then steeped in ink, diluted with a little water—this

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will give it a bluish tinge. Strong coffee lees, in which a bit of alum has been dissolved, will give the much admired brown or peat colour. The water in which green walnuts have been boiled or steeped will answer the same purpose. These colours will answer every purpose. A variety of other and miscellaneous recipes are given in the Appendix.

The winch-line, for fly-fishing, and for ordinary use in general fishing, is usually made of plaited or twisted silk. Plaited or braided silk lines, whether "dressed" or "undressed," are much less liable to kink than twisted. The "dressing" or waterproofing has been brought to such perfection that for all kinds of fishing no line of hair, or silk and hair mixed, can compare for durability and casting qualities with braided or plaited waterproofed silk, whether for the finest roach or the heaviest tapered trout or salmon line.

The length of the reel-line must of course depend on the size of the river to be fished. On narrow rivers forty yards will be ample: on broad rivers, or lakes, eighty yards will not be too much. For all kinds of fly-fishing the casting-line should be so constructed as to taper about twelve feet from the end until it terminates in the thickness of salmon-gut. When tying or knotting hair or gut, it must be rendered pliant by being soaked in warm water. When the ends require to be tied or whipped they may be moistened or flattened between the teeth. When chafed or fretted they may be rubbed with a piece of india-rubber, which will make them smooth again. To make a salmon casting-line, seven or eight lengths of triple-twisted gut must be obtained and the ends joined by the single slip-knot, wrapped with waxed silk, and covered with spirit-varnish. The pieces must be so selected and joined as to taper gradually to the end with four or five lengths of picked single gut tapering to where the fly or bait is attached.

There are many plans of joining gut or hair together. The

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plan of whipping two ends with silk is perhaps the neatest, but the least reliable. The ends are laid by the side of each other, tightly whipped, and the end fastened off as mentioned in whipping hooks. The ordinary knot called the fisherman's knot (Fig. 3) is the one commonly used. When the long ends are pulled tight it becomes a fast knot, easily separated. It may be wrapped with silk, or the knots may be left the eighth of an inch apart, as recommended by Mr. C. Pennell, and then carefully whipped with fine gut between the knots. The advantages claimed for this plan are—that in case of a sudden strain, such as striking a

FIG. 3. FIG. 4.

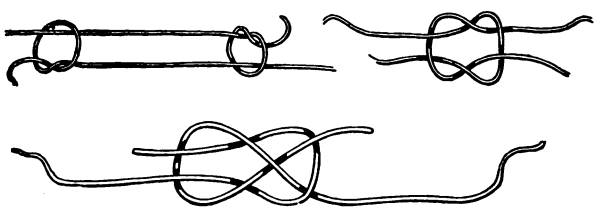

FIG. 5.

large pike or other cause, the knot, instead of parting with the force used, would only be drawn closer together, and the whipping would act as a sort of buffer. The old knot on stout or salmon-gut will break at a steady pressure of from twelve to fifteen pounds; but tied with the Pennell knot the gut is said to break at any other place in preference to the knot, which is a neat contrivance. The *sailor's knot* is a useful knot on an emergency, though not so neat as the foregoing. The two ends are crossed between the left thumb and forefinger, the end pointing towards the left lying at the top of the other; it is then bent backwards to the other end towards the body, until both ends meet in opposite directions underneath. A simple hitch is made

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with the two ends, as shown in Fig. 4. On pulling the long pieces a secure knot is made, which may be easily separated when done with without injury to the gut, or it may be whipped and varnished. The *weaver's knot* is a more secure knot than the above, but more clumsy. It is thus made:— The ends are crossed between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, but the end pointing to the right must lay at the top in this case; the piece belonging to the opposite end is then carried over the thumb at the back of the left end, and brought between the two ends until it can be held between the finger and the thumb, the right-hand end is pushed through the loop, and the knot stands thus (Fig. 5). This, though a strong knot for silk, hemp, or cotton, cannot be recommended either for hair or gut.* These lines must be dressed—that is, winch-lines, trolling-lines, and salmon-lines, or else they will speedily rot, and in all cases they must be dried ere they are put away. The lines may be steeped in boiled linseed oil, in which a little japanner's gold-size has been dissolved, in the proportion of one-eighth of the latter to seven-eighths of the former. If not found hard enough, a little more gold-size will remedy the deficiency. Boiled linseed oil in which a small knob of resin has been dissolved in an earthenware vessel over a slow fire, will answer every purpose, and its antiseptic qualities are far superior. Some add india-rubber and bees'-wax to the oil, and others copal varnish and camphor. In the absence of other dressings, the line should be stretched between two trees or posts and then well rubbed with a bit of wash-leather in which is held a small piece of deer's fat, sheep's fat, or some vaseline; in fact, all reel-lines, dressed or undressed, should be treated in this way now and then, as the fat or vaseline preserves the line and also makes it run

* See p. 109 for useful knot for fastening end of silk line to gut loop or dropper to loop, &c.

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through the rings smoothly and without much friction in the rings. Nothing ruins a good rod so quickly as brass rod rings which have become worn into grooves with sharp sides, and for this reason hard steel rings should always be used when possible. When using any of the foregoing dressings care must be taken that they are not used hot. The superfluous dressing should be removed by passing the line between a folded piece of leather held between the fingers. Two dressings of the oil and gold-size will be necessary, which should be given some months before the line is used.

The following dressing for silk lines given by Major Traherne was first published in the *Fishing Gazette*: "Mix equal parts of raw linseed oil and best copal varnish, boiling until the mixture singes a feather (this should be done out of doors owing to the inflammable nature of the solution), when cold put the line in to soak. A week will be enough for a solid-plaited line, but if the line is hollow it should remain in much longer. When thoroughly saturated, a fine day should be taken advantage of, and the line put out to dry in the open air, stretched at its full length, fastened at both ends to two wooden posts, all the superfluous dressing being carefully removed with the hand or a bit of cloth. It should not remain out, in the first stage of drying, in the rain, as a very few drops will spoil it, and the dressing will come off; but when the outer coating is tolerably dry, which will be in about a week in warm weather, wet will not affect it, although it will be advisable not to leave it out in the rain at any time if it can be avoided. In about a fortnight the line should be re-dipped in the solution, and the operation of stretching the line and removing the superfluous dressing repeated. This will be found sufficient, and nothing remains but to allow it to dry. A line should not be used for at least six months after being dressed, and the best months for dressing it are June to

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September." Major Traherne, who is one of the best salmon anglers living, points out that by using "dryers" in the solution the line can be dried very quickly, but lines so treated have the fatal objection of "knuckling" every few inches —*i.e.*, the dressing cracks through, exposing the silk to damp, looks very unsightly, and makes the line most unpleasant to fish with, as it hangs in the rings and does not cast evenly.

FISHING HOOKS are made for the angler's use of about sixteen sizes, and there are several varieties, known by the name of London, Limerick, Kirby, Kendal, round and sneck bends, according to the place where they are made, and the shape they are bent. They are made also of varied length in the shanks, to suit the different purposes for which they are used. For worm-fishing, the long-shanked hook, perfectly round in the bend, so that neither barb nor point inclines inwards, is by some considered the best. For gentles, paste, and grain, the short-shanked, sneck-bent hooks are preferred, as the point of the hook is more easily kept covered and the bait secured for a longer time. Every angler should be able to whip his own hooks on to the gut or hair. It is not difficult to "whip," but it must be done neatly to be of use. The best whipping is made of fine silk, waxed with saddler's wax, that being preferable to shoemaker's wax for angling purposes. The whipping should be commenced near the bend, and finished neatly by two slip-knots, and then varnished. The best varnish for this purpose, and for tackle generally, is that made by dissolving shellac in double its bulk of spirits of wine. One application will be found sufficient. The gut or hair should be flattened and moistened previous to whipping, by being drawn through the teeth. When the hooks are wanted for bottom-fishing, the gut should be not less than twelve inches in length and may be furnished with a loop with a whipped fastening to attach it to the line. Too large

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hooks should not be used in proportion to the size of the bait. Hooks are numbered according to size; but different makers commence differently. Some begin with No. 1 as largest, and some with No. 1 as smallest size, which causes much confusion, so that in ordering hooks or flies by post the safest plan is to send a sample hook or make a sketch of it to show size. The numbers mentioned in these pages refer to the largest as No. 1.* All hooks should be tried before using. If they bend easily they are of little value, as they are too soft. If too hard they snap suddenly. The happy medium must be chosen.

FLOATS.—These articles, so indispensable in many kinds of angling, may be purchased of all shapes and sizes at the tackle shops. Small cork floats are the handiest for general fishing, but for carp, roach and chub a small

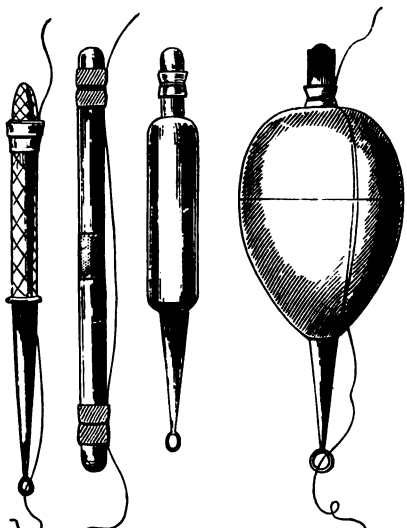

FIG. 6. FIG. 7. FIG. 8. FIG. 9.

* Except those in the list of trout flies. See illustration of hooks and scale of sizes in Appendix.

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quill must be used (Figs. 6 and 7). For fishing for pike with live bait, the float would be proportionately larger (Fig. 9). They may be easily made; a light and useful quill float is shown in Fig. 7. It is made from two quills cut through the middle, and each cut end slipped over a plug of some light wood. A useful cement for joining floats, tipping their ends to keep out the wet, and other angling and general purposes, is made of 1 oz. of bees'-wax, 5 oz. of yellow resin, melted together in an earthenware vessel; an ounce of Venetian red may be added, and about the same quantity of plaster-of-Paris. Let it boil slowly, stir it until thoroughly incorporated, and then it should be stirred until it cools. A small portion must be melted in some convenient vessel for use as required. This is useful if the young angler aspires to the manufacture of cork floats. Generally speaking, a little melted sealing-wax and the tackle spirit-varnish are all that is necessary, and answer every purpose; the quills may be ornamented, as in Fig. 6, with coloured silk; or the quills may be dyed or coloured red, the liquid dyes sold at the chemists' shops will be found the best. A little vermilion or Brunswick green added to the tackle-varnish will give his floats the brilliant red or green tint. Though the plainer and less conspicuous the tackle is the better—green is, however, better than red. On broad streams and lakes the *tumbler* float is very useful, and it is not generally known. Its appearance is shown in Fig. 10.

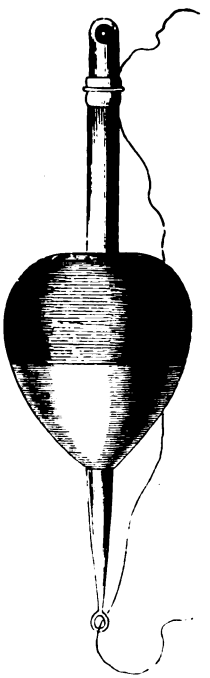

FIG. 10.

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I never saw one sold, but I have made scores for my friends, by taking out the upper quill of an ordinary rotund cork float, and adding a much longer one, with a swan-shot or lead pellet fastened in the top. This pellet should be heavy enough to cause the float to lie flat on the water, and it should be sufficiently well balanced as to show the slightest nibble by standing upright. I have cast this float with a long line far into a broad stream, and indeed this is its use. It is truly a float of the Nottingham school of anglers, and a very good one it is. A few spare float-caps, made by cutting quills into sections and whipping a bit of waxed silk round them to prevent them splitting, should form part of the bottom-fisher's outfit.

THE "SLIDER" FLOAT (see Fig. 11).—An almost indispensable float for fishing deep water is what is called "The Slider Float," because it slides up and down the line and is not fixed like an ordinary float. Instead of the usual quill cap and wire ring it has two small wire rings made to stand at right angles from the float. Now, suppose the angler is fishing on a deep lake from a boat and wishes to use a float, if his rod is twelve feet in length and the water is twenty feet deep, it is clear that if he *fixes* his float at twenty feet from the hook he will be unable to cast his line out or wind it in sufficiently. But with the "Slider" float there is no difficulty in fishing water of almost any depth. The rings on the rod should be pretty large, the line fairly fine, and to ascertain the depth you proceed as follows. Put your reel-line through both rings of the float, attach the gut-line with leads and plummet, and next fasten a bit of string or line by a slip noose as far up your reel-line as you guess the real depth of the water to be—say, twenty feet. This bit of string is simply to form a "stop" on your line beyond which your slider cannot travel up the line, so it must be large enough not to go through the small rings on the float and yet small enough to run

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freely through the rod rings. In order to make a cast—which can be done from the reel in the Nottingham style, or by pulling line off the reel as in the Thames style—you wind or pull in the line until the float is stopped by the end ring of the rod, leaving the gut line with plummet hanging from the end of the rod. The cast is then made and the reel line allowed to run out freely, and the plummet and shot draw it down through the float rings until the bit of line forming the "stop" described above is reached. If the water happens to be deeper than the distance between the "stop" on the line and the plummet the float will be pulled under—if it is not so deep, the float will lie flat on the surface; in either case it will be necessary to shift the stop up or down the line until the exact depth is ascertained, and the slider then swims upright in the water and indicates a bite like an ordinary fixed float. When you strike a fish or want to look at your bait, you draw in line and the float slides down till stopped by the knot where the gut line is fastened to the reel line.

FIG. 11.*

THE PLUMMET.—This useful little article is necessary to ascertain the depth of the water in bottom-fishing. Mine is made of thin sheet-lead, rolled into the oval shape of Fig. 12, a small piece is uncoiled, and wrapped round the hook, and then carefully and quietly let into the water.

* In the illustration of the Slider Float (Fig. 11), the top ring is made too large; it should be only large enough to allow the reel-line to run freely through it until the stop-knot on the line is reached; it must not be large enough to allow the knot to pass through. The ring at the other end should also be bent at a right angle to the float.

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Another form of plummet is sold at the shops (Fig. 13); the hook is slipped through the ring A, and the point is stuck into the cork plug in the bottom, B.

The BASKET, or CREEL, is usually made of wicker-work; and those elegant baskets know as "French made," are perhaps the most popular. The size must be regulated by the quantity of fish the angler expects to capture. These wicker creels can now be obtained so constructed as to form a comfortable seat at lunch-time or when the angler is

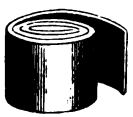

FIG. 12.

FIG. 13.

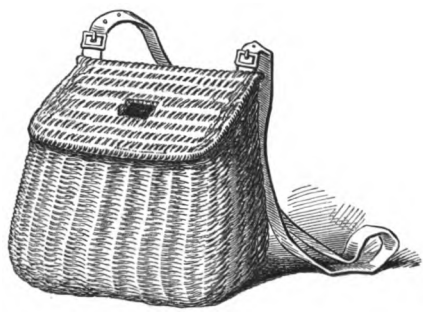

FIG. 14.

having a rest. The London Club anglers generally carry a wooden box painted a dark green colour, and use it as a seat when fishing from the bank; it contains compartments for lunch, &c., and holds many pounds of fish fresh and cool. Dock-leaves or cabbage-leaves form the best packing to keep fish fresh and cool. An extra strap or two will be found useful to attach the waterproof coat or other angling impedimenta to the basket.*

A HAVERSACK of waterproof cloth, similar in shape to

* If you wish to have some fine fish you have caught stuffed and "set-up" in a case, when you catch it kill it by a sharp blow at the back of the head, then wrap it in tissue-paper, put a damp cloth round it, and pack carefully at full-length.

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those supplied to the infantry, is in my opinion one of the most useful articles which an angler can have. It is easily packed; and as the band can be fitted with button-holes, it can be attached to the brace-buttons on the left-hand side, or to buttons stitched on purposely. A convenient size is one of twenty inches in length by twelve inches deep, fitted with a flap and two buttons, as shown in Fig. 15, to which a short strap and buckle may be added. The interior should be divided longitudinally by a third piece, and the seams should be carefully turned in, double-stitched and

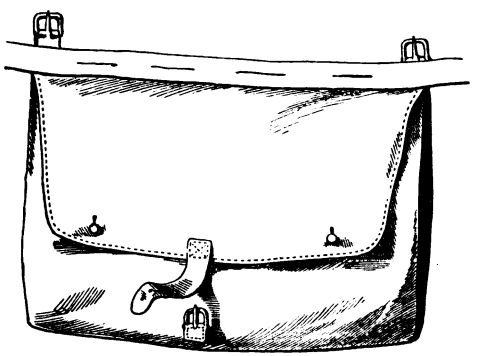

FIG. 15.

varnished. In it the angler may keep various requisites, and on occasions a change of linen. It may be fitted with rings or buckles, so as to permit the shoulder-straps to be taken off or put on at pleasure. The "Archer" ventilated fishing-bag recently invented by Mr. Edgar R. S. Bartleet, of Abbey Mills, Redditch, is one of the best bags the angler can have, and can be obtained through any fishing-tackle dealer; it is rather expensive, but most durable.

The DRAG-HOOK and CORD (Fig. 16) is suggestive of anything but pleasant ideas. It is about as awkward an article as a man could carry about with him. I would

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rather lose a hook and line than be troubled for an hour with one.

The CLEARING-RING is, on the contrary, useful and easily carried. It is used in clearing the line and hook when entangled amongst weeds, roots of trees, piles, or other encumbrances in the bed of a river. One weighing six or eight ounces, of the accompanying pattern (Fig. 17), can be made by any blacksmith. The iron in the thicker parts should be of a pear-shaped section, the thinner and sharper edge being in the interior. Those in present use are often made of solid brass and much neater than the one here shown. A piece of cord is knotted to the upper end; it is

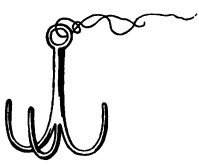

FIG. 16.

FIG. 17.

then slipped over the line, which guides it to the obstruction, and then by pulling the cord the hook and tackle may be saved.

The DISGORGER is a useful little article, made of wood, metal, or bone, of this shape (Fig. 18). It is used for releasing the hook. The fork enables the angler to force down the hook, and so release it without the disagreeable process of opening the fish, which sometimes has to be adopted. It enables the fly-fisher to prevent his flies being mangled, ruffled and damaged. The disgorger can be easily made by an ingenious boy out of the handle of an old spoon. A hole drilled in the handle enables it to be attached by a piece of twine to the button-hole.

The GAFF is a large, sharp, barbless hook, similar to a large fish-hook, but *without the barb*, and is screwed in or

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fastened to the end of a proper piece of wood, which may also be used for a landing-net handle. It should be well tempered, and is indispensable in landing large fish where the bank is high, or where the landing-net cannot be easily used. There are several varieties sold.

THE LANDING NET.—This most useful article is made in

FIG. 18.

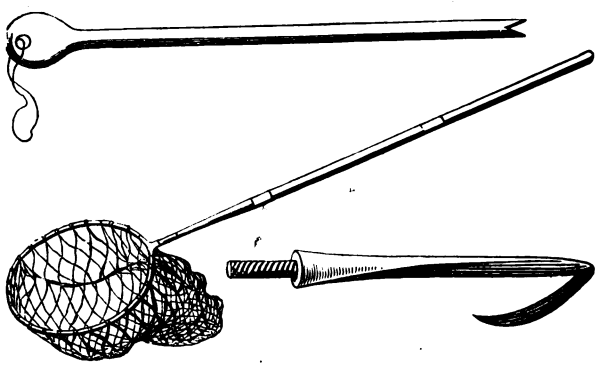

FIG. 19. FIG. 20.

a variety of ways, the collapsing flat steel ring being the most useful.* When wading or where the bank of the river is steep, or in fishing from a boat in a lock, it is indispensable. The landing-net handle should be strong, about 4 ft. in length, and made with a screw-head to hold, if required, a gaff or a "fly retriever" (Fig. 20). The inner edge should be sharp, so as to cut away the branches and twigs overhead in which the line or fly may become entangled. The net itself should be made of waterproofed flax or silk fairly large in the mesh so as not to catch the hooks easily, and in depth at least twice the diameter of the ring or hoop.

* Messrs. Watson and Hancock, of High Holborn, London, have recently brought out a splendid landing-net called the "Quick-sure."

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The ANGLER'S POCKET-BOOK or WALLET is a very useful article. The one I use is about seven inches long by about five wide, and it opens like a tailor's pattern-book; it has numerous pockets. When open it presents the appearance of Fig. 21. The covers are made of thin millboard, and the divisions of cardboard, glued to a section of oilskin-cloth, and lined with black linen, &c., fitted with elastic bands, and bound with military braid. A few parchment strips are stitched in the centre, as shown. When closed it all rolls up, and is fastened by a strap or tied

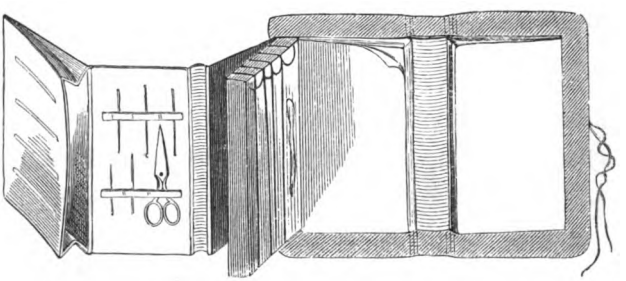

FIG. 21.

band, at the option of the angler. It will contain scissors, knife, pliers, wax, floats, hooks, gut, hair, waxed silk thread, baiting-needles, and, if necessary, fly materials, though it is better to keep these latter separate in a similar case. An excellent substitute for the book above described may be made from one of Parkins and Gotto's prize writing-cases, refitted by placing a few strips of parchment where the blotting-paper is. It forms a handy waterproof book, and has the advantage to the young angler of being cheap. Our book was suggested by, and is a modification of, this book. Fig. 21 shows a winder for six gut-lines in the centre.

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The MINNOW or LIVE-BAIT KETTLE* (Fig. 22) should be of tin or zinc, and fitted with straps to go over the shoulder. A second lid, perforated, should be added, with a hand-net to take out the bait, which otherwise are not improved by the hand of the fisherman rubbing the scales off. The live-bait kettle is used in trolling for trout and pike, and may

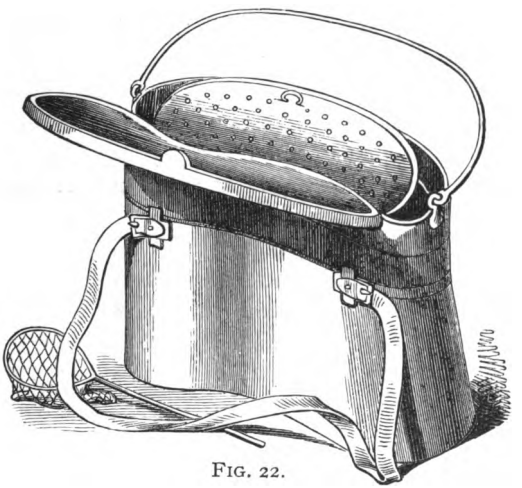

FIG. 22.

be purchased at the tackle-shops, but see that it is fitted with straps.

A pair of waterproof stockings will be found useful; but if not obtainable, two pairs of stockings should be worn, and the boots made as waterproof as possible. The best waterproof material I know as a dressing for fishing and shooting boots, was given in the *Mechanics' Magazine* some sixty years ago. It is composed of three parts tallow, one oz. yellow resin, melted in a pipkin, and rubbed into the boots when just warm. The soles and

* See also illustrations in Mr. A. Jardine's article on Pike Fishing, p. 97.

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uppers to be treated alike until they will soak no more. At first it will slightly stain the stockings. If a good colour and polish is desirable, a little bees'-wax dissolved in turpentine, and mixed with a little lamp-black, may be well rubbed in, and when the turpentine has evaporated the boots will be brilliant enough to charm the fish, and be warm and comfortable, besides lasting twice as long as they otherwise would. Curriers' "dubbing," in which a little resin has been melted, will answer as a substitute, but it is not nearly so efficacious as the above invaluable mixture.

"Dale's Dubbing" is a first-rate waterproof dressing for boots, so is "Gishurstine"; but the young angler should remember to keep grease away from his rubber waterproof coats and fishing-stockings.

Bait boxes for gentles, flannel bags for worms, a small box for paste, or, what is better for this purpose, a piece of oiled silk, pieces of thin lead, or a box of split shot, are adjuncts which the young angler will have to be provided with also—extra lengths of gut, lines, spare floats, float-caps, swivels, gimp, &c.

CHAPTER V

POINTS TO BE OBSERVED ON SELECTION OF TACKLE, BAITING HOOK, STRIKING AND PLAYING FISH, ETC.

THOUSANDS of my countrymen, however ardent their passion for more noble sport may be, must content themselves with what they can get. It is not every one, however keen may be his appetite for sport, that can indulge in frequent visits to the running, brawling, trout stream, and still less frequently to salmon rivers. If he fishes at all, he must fish in the smooth, sluggish waters which are nearest at hand, and a very respectable substitute it is to the town-immured sportsman. A fly-fisher can roam where he pleases with his rod,

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creel, line, and flies ; * but though the fly-fisher may require more skill, the bait-fisher requires more art. He must, if he wishes for sport, take every precaution and, like a skilful general, have plenty of resources to fall back upon. He must choose his ground with judgment, and prepare for his campaign with foresight and skill. The attractive ground-bait must prepare the way for the irresistible and tempting morsel which is to follow, and reward the patient angler for his trouble. To do these things well requires some knowledge of the habits of fish, their haunts, the most attractive baits, and those best adapted for the season.

His rod must be strong and light, and should have one or two tops in reserve in case of a mishap. One of the best bait-fishers I ever met always carried an extra joint with his rod of stout bamboo, which was fitted at the bottom with a stout ferrule and brass cap tapped to hold a spud, drag-hook, gaff-hook, or landing-net, while the upper end would fit the lower part of his rod, when necessary, by unscrewing the ferrule, and give him a twenty-feet sweep of a broad river. His rod consisted of four lengths, each a little over four feet long, light, but strongly made. This will answer for ordinary purposes, but when fishing for roach, the rod should be lighter than is necessary for any other species of river fish.

Except for "tight line" fishing in the Lea style a reel of some kind should always be used, it enables the angler to play and kill fish which would break away if the line was fastened to the rod; it also enables him to fish places which

* But the fly-fisher, although he may roam where he pleases, must not imagine he can fish where he pleases. He should always ascertain if fishing is allowed before he begins, and will remember with advantage the yokel's reply to the angler who asked whether fishing was allowed in a certain river, and was told, "Yes—*if they don't catch yer!*"

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the longest rod could not reach. A good Nottingham reel, or a combination Nottingham and ordinary reel with check and side bars, can be used for float-fishing, ledgering, spinning and fly-fishing. To cast well from the Nottingham reel requires a good deal of skill; the best way to learn is for the angler to get some friend to give him a few lessons. Mr. Malloch's patent casting reel is much used in Scotland in prawn and other bait fishing for salmon.

In bottom-fishing the three yards of line next the hook should be of gut as fine as possible consistent with strength. Nay, some roach-fishers use single horsehair for their bottom lines, though fine silkworm gut is equally as good and infinitely more reliable. The gut-lines must, however, be of the colour of the water; light green is perhaps the best general tint, and best adapted for clear water, as it resembles a film of confervæ; the mode of dyeing it is elsewhere described. They should not be left white, and it is of great importance to have one or more gut-lines stained of a reddish sandy hue for use after a flood. For roach the line should be of gut or hair. For perch, a well-plaited silk line is the best, and many anglers use this as a reel-line for all purposes, and vary only the foot line. The lines should be weighted carefully and neatly with split or perforated shot, or, what is equally as good, fine strips of the thin lead with which tea-chests are lined, and which may be obtained of any grocer. These strips are handy, and can be easily wound round the lower links of the line; they are also easily adjusted, and are not so liable to injure the gut as split shot, which have an awkward knack of breaking, nipping, and pinching the line. It is also more convenient to carry, less liable to be lost, and can be taken off the line with less trouble, and, what is more important, with less liability of damage to the line than the shot.

No hook, as before mentioned, should be used without being carefully tried. They should be whipped on to the

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line as neatly and as delicately as possible with slightly waxed silk the *colour* of the *bait* intended to be used. Hooks for gentles, greaves, paste, and grain should be sneck-bent, short in the shank, and may be whipped to the bend of the hook, so that the bait may readily cover the wire, and not slip off easily, which would be the case if the long-shanked and straight-bent hooks were used. The latter, however, are the best for worm baits, as they allow the worm to be threaded easily.

Some bait-fishers, particularly those who have been in the habit of fly-fishing, seldom use a float, and talk learnedly of their quick eye and sensitive touch, which enables them to detect a bite in a moment, and strike their fish. The young beginner, however, must have a float, though the smaller it is the better, except perhaps for barbel and chub fishing. Apart from the indication of a bite, or even a nibble, it shows when the bait drags the bottom, or has caught a weed. The ordinary float should never be allowed to lie flat on the water, but should sit upright, and in smooth water should have the point of the quill just above the surface. Quill floats are best for carp, roach, tench, and bream fishing; cork floats are used for pike, perch, chub, barbel, &c., also for roach in such rivers as the Thames and Avon. But whatever float is used it should suit the style of the fishing and the nature and force of the water. When fishing near to or under the end of the rod no slack line should be allowed, the line should be kept as taut as possible so as to enable the angler to strike promptly. Numbers of fish are lost through anglers carelessly allowing the line to lap over the float in coils, or hang in the water, while their floats are slanting or dragging, and their baits are being nibbled off.

To ensure your float acting properly, two things must be attended to: you must ascertain the depth of the water. For this purpose a plummet (see p. 28) is necessary, and one made

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out of a coil of "tea lead," before mentioned, is the best, as it can be lapped into a flat shape, which is less cumbersome for the pocket. Place the plummet on your hook, and when it sinks the top of your float to the surface of the water, you have the exact depth. If you are fishing for gudgeon, tench, roach, or barbel, you must fish close to the bottom of the water. If for chub or carp, from three to six inches off. But many anglers often fish for carp on the bottom, where clear places can be obtained. The float must be moved up or down the line, according to the depth the angler wishes to fish, and be fastened with an india-rubber or quill float-cap. See that it is leaded properly, and stands upright in the water free from all obstruction, and ready to yield to the slightest nibble; and if an ordinary quill float, examine it carefully to see if it is likely to admit water into the quill, and so render it less buoyant. A little white wax will at once stop any crevice or fissure. One thing the young angler must learn quietly and by experience: he must learn to strike his fish with a quick upward turn of the wrist, and more especially when fishing for roach, or he will miss five bites out of six. He must not do it violently, for if he does he will disturb and alarm the fish; neither must he wait for the nibble until the bait is gone or the fish hooks itself. The wrist must be turned towards one slightly to the right, with just sufficient force to lift the bait a few inches. Many a day's fishing has been spoiled, good tackle destroyed, fish tormented or rendered shy, by the violent exhibition of strength in this neat and essential portion of the angler's art.

The fish being hooked, be merciful in your strength. Do not be flurried, and jerk the fish out of the water as if your life depended on your sending it into the middle of the next meadow. If your tackle is well chosen, you may lift your fish, of small size, out of the water without any struggle, or a very short one. Sometimes you may alight

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on a shoal of small-sized fish, and then it will be necessary to pull them out at once, and allow them no play. This is particularly the case with perch, for these bold gentlemen have strong mouths, bite boldly, are not easily frightened by a bit of gut or horsehair. Out with him as soon as possible, so that he may not alarm his companions. Chub and barbel, and other large-sized fish, should be allowed a little play; the line must be kept tight to prevent him going just where he pleases. He will soon begin to tire, and show by his languid and enfeebled fins that he is succumbing to the influences and skill brought against him. In all kinds of angling the great secret in playing a fish properly, is to keep the point of your rod well up so that it acts like a spring when the fish pulls against it; if you let the fish pull your rod down he will get a dead pull on the gut and break it.

Sometimes when fishing with fine and delicate roach tackle you may hook a large fish, which will try all your skill. Your temper must be as smooth as a placid lake, and your wrist as firm and as pliable as a fly-fisher's ere you can land the monster who is held only by the single horse-hair line and diminutive hook. It will require all your skill and address, but it may and can be done, and you may boast of the event with real pride, as showing that bait-fishing is at times as excitingly full of doubt, suspense, and fear as the salmon-fisher could desire on the Shannon rapids at Castle Connell.

The bait-fisher requires no little patience, a tolerable selection of baits—the best of which will be described; but ere I pass to the consideration of the baits, let me dwell for a few minutes whilst I show, as clearly as I can, how to bait the hook with a worm or worms. You must first rub the ends of your forefinger and thumb of both hands in sand, bran, or dry earth, to prevent the worm slipping, or otherwise you will have great difficulty in properly

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adjusting the slimy gentleman on the hook. Insert the point of the hook at the head of the worm, and work it gently over the bend, and up the shank and along the gut, until not more than a quarter of an inch or so hangs beyond the point of the hook, which must be left to wriggle about. Large worms as a rule should have a fourth of their length left loose; small worms should have the barb of the hook close to their tails. When dead, the worms should be replaced immediately. It is a waste of time to attempt to entice fish with a dead worm. Particular attention must be paid to the worm in putting it on the hook, so that the skin may not be perforated by the barb when once in the body; and the tail of the worm should incline inwards, so as to prevent, as far as possible, the worm working the point of the hook through the skin. Fish are quick in detecting the fine point of the hook.

If the worms are small, two may be placed on the hook, as it makes the bait appear more natural, and of course more deadly. It may be done in two ways: the larger of the two worms may be threaded in the way above described to about half of its length, the hook may then be brought through and the worm passed on to the gut. A smaller worm is then chosen, and the hook inserted at such a distance from the head as to bring the point of the hook within a quarter of an inch of the head of the worm. The upper worm is then brought down to meet the smaller worm, and the tails entwined within the bend of the hook. A second plan is to insert the hook about midway down the worm, and bring it out a little below the tail; and the second worm should have the hook inserted half an inch below the tail, and brought close to the head; then there are two ends to wriggle and make the bait appear more lively. I cannot too strongly impress the young angler with the necessity of baiting his hook with care, for on it his success will in a great measure depend. When I come to speak of

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bottom-fishing for trout, I shall mention two or three other methods of worm-baiting; but the young angler will find the above sufficiently alluring for his purpose.

CHAPTER VI

THE BAIT-FISHER'S BAIT TABLE

THOSE baits are the best and the most killing which are natural to the season. Children don't look for cherries on the trees in February, and fish seem to know that seed and grain ought not to be coming down the stream in April. Sometimes a strange and extempore bait will succeed when an ordinary one will not; but it is the exception, not the rule, and depends for success on the caprice or gluttonous instinct of the fish, which may vary day by day, according as it is surfeited or otherwise by its ordinary food.

1. Worms stand first in the bait-fisher's list, and of these the *dew-* or *lob-worm* is the largest, and the best bait for large barbel, grayling, perch, trout, bream, or eels, nay, even the lordly salmon does not disdain to take one at times. You may sometimes find them in gardens or in fields by digging; but they may be found by thousands at night, or in the early morning, on sheep-walks, lawns, and meadows after a fall of heavy dew or rain. It seems a ridiculous but is none the less a good plan to search for them by the light of a lantern. In dry weather they sink deep into the earth; but in that case, if the ground is well soaked, they will come out. A strong solution of salt and water, or water in which walnuts or their green shells have been boiled, will, it is said, bring them speedily to the surface; but it is better to dig for them in moist mould or in the bottom of a ditch.

2. The *Blue-head* is a common worm in Ireland, and not unfrequent in England. Its head is blue—its body of a

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cream colour, without nobs, and the skin of its belly feels "sharply rough" to the finger. It scours readily, and lives long in the water. It is an excellent bait; salmon and trout bite at it readily, and few river-fish will pass it by. They are sometimes found in rich garden mould, round the roots of plants, and under old heaps of decaying vegetable matter where the soil is slightly loose or gravelly. The marsh-worm is also an excellent bait, especially for perch, trout, and barbel.

2. *Brandlings* are found in old dunghills and are capital baits. They are branded or striped with red and yellow bands, they should be well scoured in pieces of old netting, rag sacking, or kept in damp flax waste.

4. *Red-worms.* — These pinkish-coloured, thin, ivory worms, common in old tan-heaps, are a good tough bait for small fish. They are also found in old dung-heaps, where the manure and soil meet, and occasionally by the side of ditches. They must be lightly handled, and the hook must be small-sized and light in the wire. They are the best bait for gudgeons, and one of the best general baits for all fish.

5. *Blood-worms* are the larvæ of a light yellowish gnat, and are found in some ponds, ditches, and stagnant water, generally in the mud. They are about an inch in length, and are a killing bait, if two or three are put on the hook together, for small fish. The shank of the hook should be short and the wire as fine as possible.

6. *Tag-tail-worms* have the recommendation of being ready for use as soon as found, but they are by no means equal to the foregoing. They are found in marly banks and in strong clayey soil. They may be known by their light-red colour and yellow tail.

Slugs and other worms have been recommended, and may have been used with success under exceptional circumstances for barbel, chub, or eels; but as a rule the worms mentioned are much better.

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Worms may be preserved and scoured in several ways. I always adopt the old-fashioned plan of keeping them in moss in a large unglazed earthenware flower-pot. The moss must be clean-picked, damped, and the worms placed at the top, and a little cream or milk sprinkled over them, and the pot then set aside in a cool place. If the worms are not for immediate use, some well-rotted dung and rich mould may be placed at the bottom of the pot, and the moss kept damp. Worms treated in this way quickly scour, are lively and long-lived in the water. Every day or two they should be looked over, and the bruised and sickly ones thrown away. This plan will be found efficient, and cause but little trouble. Mr. Blaine, in his *Encyclopædia of Rural Sports*, mentions a plan of soaking a clean coarse hempen or linen cloth in water, in which some mutton suet has been boiled. When cold, put it into a tub with the worms, and some fresh mould, and tie over the top a linen cloth to admit air. Keep the whole in a cool situation, and the worms will keep lively and fit for use for many months. I have never tried this plan. My plan answers every purpose, and enables the angler to keep different sorts of worms in separate pots as required.

Scouring renders worms tough and lively on the hook, Dead worms are almost valueless as baits.

7. *The Maggot or Gentle* is an excellent bait for roach, dace, carp, bream, chub, &c., more especially in the summer and autumn months. They are procured in large towns at the fishing-tackle shops, and in the country a supply can generally be procured at the tallow-chandler's. Perhaps the best for angling purposes that can be procured are those obtained by hanging some animal substance, such as a sheep's head or bullock's liver, in a place where flies abound, and, when it is fully blown, place it in a tub half-full of bran or sand for the maggots to scour and clean themselves. They are scoured and made tough by keeping them for

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three or four days in sand or bran. In warm weather they must be kept in a vessel filled with damp sand in any cool and shady place; in the winter they should be kept in a large deep earthenware jar in a cellar and protected from frost. Use the best *golden* sand, as silver sand is too hard and gritty The young angler who uses gentles for bait in the summer will find that they turn to the chrysalis stage very quickly, and if kept for a day or too turn to bluebottle-flies. In the Thames and other rivers a red chrysalis on the hook, either with or without a white or yellow gentle, is often very killing. If gentles are wanted in winter the same process must be followed in the latter part of November, and when the piece of meat or game is well blown it is laid in a tub or long box (the latter is best), half-filled with dry pulverised cow-dung and sifted mould moistened. The same compost is sifted over the carcass, and gradually pressed down. The box may be then buried in the earth, or placed in a cool situation. The gentles can be taken from one end of the box without disturbing the others. When turned into the chrysalis state, they are useful for ground-bait, and sometimes roach will bite at them. The gentles obtained at a knacker's or bone-boiler's are nasty things, and should only be used as ground-bait. They are truly carrion—disagreeable alike to carry and handle, eating their way through the stoutest bag. The whitest gentles are obtained from fish.

8. *The Caddis-worm*, or straw-bait.—This curious insect, which is found at the edge of most rivers in its strange case, is the larvæ of some of the angler's best flies. I have found it an excellent bait in every stream where it is found in the Midland shires. There is scarcely any other bait about the merits of which so many diverse opinions exist. My opinion of its merits has been strengthened by many angling correspondents. Caddis may be kept in a linen bag, dipped

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frequently in the water to keep them mosit. One of these singular grubs has been added with killing effect to an artificial fly, but where fly-fishing only is allowed this is poaching.

Two of these baits are generally placed on the hook together. The hook must enter close under the head and be brought out at the tail. If the hook is a very small one, one only may be used; but the hook and shank should both be covered. Artificial caddis are sometimes used; and in the chapter on "Flies, and how to Dress them," a plan of making them is described.

9. The *Meal-worm* is a sort of grub common in old mills where meal has been kept; it is not unlike, if not identical with, the weevil of ship-biscuit. It is much liked by trout and other fish; requires no scouring, and may be kept in meal.

10. The *Wasp-grub* is a soft milky grub, taken from a wasp's nest. They require to be toughened by being placed in an oven to be half-baked before use. They may be kept in a jar in a cool cupboard. Trout and nearly all other fish bite freely at them, and it is said that a too frequent use of them spoils the fishing for any other bait.

11. *Salmon-roe.*—To use this as bait is poaching—illegal and unsportsmanlike. In fact, it is illegal to use any kind of fish-roe as bait, and to buy or sell or have in one's possession salmon-roe is a *criminal offence*, so that to give directions how to prepare it and fish with it might lead to some of our readers being fined or imprisoned.

In fishing with worms the angler should remember that, in thick water, fish have to depend on scent rather than sight, for "pea-soup" water is worse to fish than a November yellow fog to Londoners. So that, unless the water is clear, a freshly dug worm is better than a scoured one.

In using wasp-grubs as bait it should be remembered that the

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grubs are rapidly transformed into wasps, so the comb should not be put into a cupboard and forgotten! The best grubs are those in the outside rows of the comb-cells, in shape like tiny sacks of flour and of a fine ivory colour. Some anglers bake the comb on a tile or plate in the oven; others boil it in a saucepan, adding some salt, this makes the grubs keep longer; a dozen or two should be thrown in now and then so as to sink near the hook bait.

A favourite bait on the Lea is paste made from arrow-root biscuit. In the Norfolk Broads and rivers, bread-paste coloured vermilion is a capital bait. For carp, boiled potatoes and boiled peas are good baits, but carp are exceedingly cunning and cautious; you require to fish early or late and to ground-bait carefully. Light-ledgering is the best method: use a small bullet and cast your bait well out —of course where the ground-bait was thrown in—rest the rod so that you can see the slightest pull at the top and keep the line stretched between the rod and the bullet. The same method answers well in river-fishing for barbel, &c.

12. *The Cockroach.*—Trout and other fish bite at cock-roaches at a mill-tail, from whence they might be supposed to have come.

13. *Greaves*, familiarly known as "scratchings," are the refuse of a tallow-chandler's melting-copper, pressed into large cakes. The best are, however, those made by the lard renderers and refiners. To prepare it for use, it is broken up and scalded. The whitest portions are chosen for the hook, and the others are used for ground-bait for barbel, chub, &c.

14. *Boiled or stewed Malt, Barley*, or *Wheat*, is a famous bait for roach in the autumn, and is far better than brewers' grains, which should only be used for ground-bait. If the angler has time to prepare the grain himself, wheat should be steeped all night in plenty of lukewarm water, and then

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placed in a warm (not hot) oven for several hours, until the skin cracks and shows the white farina. Malt, which appears to be a more attractive bait than either barley or wheat, is prepared in a similar way; but for success it should not be allowed to get too soft, and should only just show the inside. The plumpest grains should be chosen for the hook, and the rest used as ground-bait. In August and September I have found this a more attractive bait than any paste. Sometimes the husks are removed, and the flour kneaded to a fine paste. London anglers all speak well of boiled pearl barley as a bait for roach, and I have tried it with success in the Avon.

I never met with a bait-fisher who was not "great" in the matter of pastes, and able to sing loudly in praise of this or that compound, either of his own invention, or that of some village Walton.

Plain paste is made by kneading moistened bread-crumbs until it becomes adhesive. To make a capital paste-bait, take some of the inside of a loaf of white or brown bread, put it into a rag, dip it into water once, then screw the rag round the lump and knead it between the fingers by pressing the lump in the rag. If the stream is a running one, a little lint or cotton-wool may be mixed with it to prevent it being easily washed off the hook. A small portion of vermilion is sometimes added to give it a pink colour. Stale bread is used for roach-fishing, and new bread for chub-fishing. It is necessary that the hands should be perfectly clean. It is best to carry the bread to the river-side, and make the paste just before using, as it has a tendency to turn sour.

Greaves paste, for barbel, is made by dipping white bread into water in which greaves has been boiled, and then kneading it. The hook should have a small bit of greaves on the point when this paste is used.

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Sweet paste is made by adding honey to bread-crumbs, and then working it to a proper consistence. I think highly of this paste for carp, chub, and roach, and it is improved by adding a small quantity of gin.

Cheese paste is made of rotten Cheshire cheese and bread for chub: for roach, new cheese and stale bread.

Adhesive pastes are made of size obtained by boiling parchment or white leather cuttings in water. Useful only in rapid waters.

With respect to baits, almost any insect or small grub may be tried when ordinary baits fail. Wild fruits, such as blackberries, which overhang a pond or stream are also good at times.

GROUND-BAITS are nearly as varied as the baits themselves, and should be freely thrown in from twelve to fifteen, and even twenty hours, before the swim is fished.

Meal ground-bait is useful for chub, dace, roach, and carp in deep waters. Bread, oatmeal, and bran must be well kneaded together with a little water until they will form tough balls, and should be used with the sweet paste.

Boiled rice is a good ground-bait when fishing with gentles, and one grain placed nicely on the hook will sometimes attract a roach.

Raw rice and large-grained white sago, the latter especially, are useful when fishing with boiled malt.

Bread and clay, or bran and clay, kneaded together, and a large stone placed in the middle, is a useful ground-bait when fishing with paste. To the bran and clay gentles or worms may be added, and thrown into the stream; and as they creep out, the fish take them, and are encouraged to take your finer bait. In deep heavy water, this is one of the best ground-baits.

Greaves boiled and mixed with clay or bran is a good ground-bait for barbel. Wet sand and carrion gentles, or chewed bread, are all good ground-baits.

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When fishing with worms, clay, malt dust, or comb (as it is called), and bran may be mixed together with some chopped worms, and a little bullock's or sheep's blood may be added and made into tenacious balls.

A simple method of making a clean pleasant ground-bait is to soak the crusts of a loaf in warm water until quite soft, then draw off the water, add some bran and some boiled potatoes, and work the whole into a sort of dough, but it must not be too tough.

The young angler should recollect that his object is to attract the fish, and not to feed them, therefore when fishing he should use ground-bait sparingly. It should always be of the same nature as the baits to be used, but of inferior quality. Without the use of ground-bait, the chances of the angler's success are but small.

CHAPTER VII

MINNOW, MILLER'S THUMB, LOACH, RUFFE, GUDGEON, BLEAK, DACE, ROACH, CHUB, AND BREAM

NEARLY every description of fish may be caught by the bait-fisher if he provides himself with proper tackle, uses it in the best manner, and in right season. To be successful he should know somewhat of the haunts of the fish, their method and time of feeding, and, above all, when they are in season. It is illegal and unsportsmanlike in the extreme for anglers to take fish when they are not only out of condition, but spawning, and thereby destroying the breeding fish and future sport. I have already touched upon the general habits of fish—their sense of hearing, sight, and smell (Chap. II.); and to the remarks there made I would again direct the young angler's attention, ere I touch upon

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the various kinds of fish which will afford him sport. Following out the plan I proposed at the commencement, I begin with the smaller fry, which are easily caught, and though not of much value in themselves, are useful as baits for the larger and more valuable fish.

The MINNOW is well known to every schoolboy who has seen a rivulet. Beautiful in shape, rapid in motion, and moving in shoals, they are at once bold, gregarious, and voracious feeders. For the purposes of the troller and spinner they are usually caught with a hand-net. A bent pin and a small red worm enables a boy to catch any number. They will take a bit of paste or a gentle voraciously. If a worm is used, tied to a horsehair, they may be pulled out by the dozen.

The LOACH is a handsome little fish commonly found under stones in a trout stream—it is a deadly bait for trout and salmon. In Ireland it is called the "Colley."

The MILLER'S THUMB is not a pleasant fish to look at. His bullet head and heavy shoulders give him a clumsy look. They bite freely at a worm, and do not despise gentles.

The RUFFE is a fierce-looking, bold-biting fish, somewhat like a small perch. They may be caught during the whole of the summer months, and afford excellent sport to the young angler. Wherever one is caught there will be plenty of others. They like rather deep water, in a hole close by the eddying of a stream. Ground-bait with clay balls, in which bits of worms have been rolled. Though small, they form a respectable fry.

The GUDGEON is a better known fish, and one that is esteemed a choice morsel, even by gourmands. They bite freely, and there are but few streams in England where he does not abound. I have caught them by the dozen in canals and in the rivulets running into larger streams.

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There is no difficulty in getting a respectable dish of this fine-shaped and excellent fish, which are largely in demand for live-bait for jack, and occasionally for trout. They are very prolific, and generally spawn about May. The tackle adapted to catch them is a small light rod, a fine gut or single hair bottom line, a very small hook, a small brandling or red worm, a bit of paste, or a gentle. A light quill float is generally used. A paste in which a little hemp-seed has been mixed has been used and recommended as a ground-bait. In all running streams and clear water the grand secret of catching gudgeon is to rake the bottom of the stream so as to stir up the mud and discolour the water. The gudgeon haste to where they suppose their food to be, and with a small well-scoured red worm, lightly threaded on a small hook, they may be caught by scores close to the bottom of the stream. If the worm is too big, use only the head. When one spot has been fished, repeat the process in another place. Gudgeon are too fond of "nibbling," but otherwise they bite freely. There is another mode of angling for gudgeon, but it is only excusable when in a hurry for "live bait." The flat plummet is fixed to an ordinary perch hook, and attached to a gut-line. Two or three hooks are suspended above the bullet, in the manner of a "paternoster," and firmly looped in the manner of "droppers," as described in "Fly-fishing." These hooks are baited with worms as before mentioned. The plummet is let down to the bottom in a promising part of the stream, and the hooks are suffered to lie on the bottom or float about in the running water. If the line is held tight, every bite will be perceptible, and if the angler be not in too great a hurry to strike, the fish are easily caught. Epicures enjoy the gudgeon when fried crisp on butter and bread-crumbs, and served hot with melted butter for sauce.

BLEAK are found in the majority of clear streams, where

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there is a good current. They spawn in May or June, and are soon as lively as ever. Small as they are, they are very active, and shine like silver. In fine weather they play on the surface of the water, and will bite freely at a small brown fly, and, indeed, there are worse sports than whipping for bleak on a summer's evening with a light rod, fine tackle, and two or three small flies as droppers attached to eight or nine feet of gut. When the weather is colder, the bleak may be taken by a paternoster* line, made somewhat similar to that described in fishing for gudgeon, but without a bullet. The hooks should be baited with gentles, and the angler should choose a spot near a rapid run of water, where the current flows quick from a sluice, and near the whirling eddies of a mill-tail. They bite freely, and when gentles are scarce a little bit of white leather from a kid glove may be placed on a hook on which a small artificial fly has been whipped. The float, if one is used, should be light and small. They are cooked similar to sprats, which they much resemble.

The DACE, like the minnow, belongs to the carp tribe, and is a bold biter. He is somewhat elegant in shape, and he is one of the best fish for the young angler to try for. He is not particular as to the bait you offer him; he will dart at the natural or artificial fly at the surface, and take the worm, paste, or gentle at the bottom. The tackle must, however, be as fine as that recommended for roach-fishing. He varies somewhat in size, and when large will tax all the skill of the youthful fisherman. He is gregarious, loves the society of his fellows, and delights in the scours and rapid currents of most rivers. The free-moving waters of a mill-tail, or the smart stream of a narrow-arched bridge, or the junction of two streams afford him a suitable home. The dace spawn early in the spring, and in May they are in condition. They

* See also p. 63.

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seem almost to fly through the water, so rapid are their movements. They will bite freely at the artificial red and black palmers or spiders, particularly if the point of the hook is tipped with a live gentle. They afford good sport with the natural fly, as described in "Dipping." The flesh-fly, house-fly, or ant-fly may be used. In hot weather they are to be sought for in deeper water. When bottom-fishing for dace, use ground-bait of a hard tough nature. Oatmeal, browned over the fire, mixed with treacle, and then made up into small hard balls, I have found the best. In hot weather they bite most freely in the morning and evening; in colder weather in the middle of the day. For practising the young angler in the details of the gentle art, I think dace-fishing holds the very highest place, though the fish does not rank high in the kitchen.

The ROACH has long been the shy object of the bait-fisher's art, and roach-fishing demands special skill and appliances. The line must be of the finest gut, stained to the colour of the water; the hook must be of the smallest, with a short shank, and whipped with fine silk of a light pink or white colour, and attached to a link of single hair or very fine gut. The shot should be fixed a foot or more above the bait, which should be but an inch or two above the bottom of the water. The float should be of the lightest quill, and so weighted that only the tip appears above the surface of the water. The rod should be long and light, and those made of Spanish cane are the best I have seen, as they permit the fish to be delicately and promptly struck. When roach-fishing, the depth should be plumbed and ground-baited the evening before. If about to fish with paste, the meal ground-bait before described will be the best. The oat-meal and treacle ground-bait, described in dace-fishing, may also be used with effect when roach-angling, if made into balls of a small size, and thrown near the float. Roach

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spawn in April and May. They feed best and are in finest condition in the cold months. From June till late in the autumn they haunt the gravelly bed of a softly flowing deep stream, along which the insects, grain, or other food is gently carried down, close at bottom, but not touching it. Long as the line may be, and it is sometimes necessary to fish eight or nine feet deep, there should not be more than eighteen inches or two feet between the tip of the float and the end of the rod. I may mention in passing that floating a bait in the Nottingham style is a deadly way, as also is stret-pegging or tight-corking.* Early in the spring I have caught roach with a red worm, but, as a rule, I prefer waiting until August before I try for this subtle and shy fish. I find, in August, they will bite early in the morning and late in the evening at gentles. Caddis and gentles are taken freely if the ground-bait has been attended to. In the heat of the day, and during the evening, roach may be attracted by the yellow fly, so common on cow-dung, if carefully "dipped" on the surface. I have taken them with a blue-bottle tipped with a gentle, frequently; but the angler must be out of sight, and fish quietly. As the autumn progresses, the best bottom-bait will be found to be boiled malt, wheat, or pearl barley. If the former is used, it must be so placed on the hook that the point and shank of the hook are hidden, and the tempting luscious inside may be seen. If the hook, however, has a long shank, it is fatal to success with large fish. A handful of malt may be thrown in as ground-bait, and large-grained unboiled sago, and even rice, is often found attractive. It requires, however, some skill to play a good roach, and I have seen them frequently, one pound and over, caught and landed when the bottom line was a single horsehair. The

* This is practically ledgering with a float. See p. 63.

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roach, like the carp, is fond of sucking at the bait, and he should be struck firmly and delicately at the slightest nibble. Pastes are largely used to attract roach, and good sport is sometimes obtained by this means. Roach seem to like sweet paste, and that made with a little honey, gin, and new bread is often successful when plain paste fails to attract. When the fish are on the feed, a plain paste, provided it is made with clean hands, will be found all that is necessary. I have sometimes found that the addition of a little essence of anchovies to the paste has a killing effect when all other means failed. The principle of success in roach-fishing, and with the majority of other members of the carp tribe, is to have fine tackle, a delicate hook, a sharp eye for a nibble, and plenty of patience. The home of the roach is on the deep side of streams, in slow gentle eddies, and under bridges.

The CHUB is to be found in nearly all our English rivers. He is a stout, powerful fish, not very good to eat, but tolerably handsome-looking—a bold feeder when he thinks nobody is looking, and not very fastidious as to what he eats. He haunts deep holes, lies at the bottom of old river-side walls, overhanging banks, and rough rapid streams. He spawns early, and is in season again about June. He has what the phrenologists call large inhabitativeness, and may generally be found in the same spot year after year. In the summer weather, where no trout stream is near, chub-fishing affords good sport. He will rise freely at an artificial fly.* Red spiders and palmers of various colours seem to be his favourites. Imitate a humble-bee or a blow-fly and they will rise freely. A big red palmer-fly with two or three gentles on the hook cast as a fly under the boughs, and near the banks where chub lie in hot weather, is a most deadly bait.

* Mr. B. R. Bambridge, of Eton, makes a splendid chub-fly from dressing given by the late Francis Francis.

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Cast the palmer close to the bank, draw it out gently, and if you see a wave follow it, it is pretty sure to be a chub; wait a second and then strike. In the evening they will take a white moth. In dipping for them, the grasshopper, beetle, and cockchafer may be used, and even a butterfly will not be rejected. The rod must be like a fly-fisher's, and fitted with a free running Nottingham reel and tackle; for, when first hooked, the chub makes a desperate effort to escape. He, however, soon tires, and cries "enough." The best plan of baiting with live insects will be found in the chapter on "Fishing with the Natural Fly." To the bait-fisher the chub is also an object of attraction in consequence of the sport he affords. He is, however, shyer than the roach, and requires fine tackle to delude him. In the earlier months of the year the chub prefers a red worm. They are also fond of gentles and cheese paste, or little pellets of tallow and cheese, flavoured slightly with musk. I may here mention that gentles from a dead rat are held to be more killing than any others in consequence of their musky odour. The chub likes a fair-sized bait better than a small one. The spinal-cord of a bullock, if in convenient bits, will entice him, particularly if bullock's or sheep's brains have been used as a ground-bait. Greaves (see Table of Baits) are used as ground-bait, and the whitest pieces kept for the hook. The hook itself may be tipped with a live gentle, and care must be taken that the greaves will not prevent the fish being hooked when struck, in consequence of their toughness and firmness. In the summer he will freely take a minnow or small frog. He fights and feeds best in frosty weather, when he is in the best condition. The best method then is to fish from a boat or punt, and let your bait be carried down by the stream as far as you can see the float well in front of you —fish under the boughs of trees and under overhanging

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banks, drop your punt down very gently a few yards at a time, and throw in a little ground-bait now and then.

The BREAM is a common fish in most rivers in the fen counties, or which flow through marshy ground. They spawn late in June or early in July, and rapidly multiply and grow to a large size. They are broad, ungainly fish, and have been likened to a pair of bellows. They bite freely, but they have no little cunning, and it requires the angler to be very wary if he wishes to secure these unwieldy inhabitants of our broad, sluggish rivers; running tackle will be required, and the hook may be a No. 8 or 9, securely whipped to a yard of gut with the bottom strand as fine as possible, consistently with safety. A quill float is necessary, as the hook should touch or trail along the bottom. Boiled potatoes, bread, and bran kneaded together make an excellent ground-bait. Red worms are the best bait in the spring, early in the morning and late in the evening. In summer, gentles and pastes prove attractive. When the weather is warm and gloomy, or a slight breeze ripples the surface of the water, bream will often bite, particularly after a warm drizzling rain. Bream have a sort of fancy for a dew-worm, but he sucks it and does not bite. When he is hooked he exerts his strength, and makes for the weeds. The angler must keep him in the open water, or else the tackle will assuredly break. It requires no little patience and skill to land a large bream, and, when landed, the skin is slimy and not peculiarly pleasant. His home is in the broad bends of a river, and he is sometimes found with his family beneath the shade of an overhanging willow, particularly where there is a good depth of water.

An excellent ground-bait for all pond-fish is made by working bran up into balls with boiled potatoes; use two hooks, one on and one just off, the bottom one baited with paste made from new *brown* bread, and on the other hook a

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bit of white paste, or a red worm, or bit of boiled potato. If the water is well stocked and has not been over-fished you are sure to take bream, tench, and eels with these baits.

[See foot-note to Tench-fishing in next chapter, p. 60.]

CHAPTER VIII

CARP, TENCH, BARBEL, PERCH, EELS, AND LAMPREY

THE CARP is one of the most difficult fish to catch. Patience, skill, ingenuity, and the most delicate and lightsome touch is necessary to hook him, and when hooked he is difficult of management. He is, however, much esteemed when caught, and furnishes a respectable dish to the cook. It has not fallen to my lot to catch more than three or four carp during my angling experiences, and they were taken in a pond which was full of them. I have been tolerably successful in capturing most other fish, but the Fates in this instance were against me. The tackle should be fine but strong, and fitted to a running line, and the hook should be a No. 7 or 8. The difficulty in capturing this artful gentleman has suggested all kinds of baits, scented pastes, green peas, green gentles, larvæ, cereals, potatoes, and worms, not forgetting a grasshopper or a bluebottle-fly; and arises from his sly method of nibbling or sucking off the bait, &c.; for this reason I think that boiled wheat or malt would be more likely to induce him to take the hook into his mouth, particularly if the pitch had been well ground-baited. When hooked he will struggle gamely; so beware of the weeds. Sweet paste made with honey, with a little scent, is said to lure them. Later in the year half a ripe cherry, or a green pea boiled in sugar, is recommended. They spawn at the latter end of April or

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beginning of May, and are very prolific. They will not bite in cold or windy weather, and in sunny weather they leave the muddy deeps, which they love, for the shallows; and if the angler can keep out of sight he may have a better chance of success under these circumstances. Carp, however, do nothing in a hurry; they like to contemplate the bait ere making their meal. You may capture carp in the night, if you like nocturnal sport; and a friend who lives where carp abound says that he is successful with sweet paste, and he has tried the balsam of Tolu paste mentioned in the second chapter, and found it attractive. Stagnant waters, with deep oozy bottoms, and near floodgates, are favourite haunts of carp.

The TENCH, with its shining dark olive coat, is one of the best of the carp tribe, and much nonsense has been written about his healing and medicinal qualities—for instance, that its slime will heal the ills of other fish: nay, even the ravenous and cruel pike is said to respect this member of the carp tribe out of respect for its healing virtues! It is said to be one of the preventives of the plague, that it relieves pains in the head, cures jaundice, and removes inflammation in the eyes. The tench, like the carp, will live a long time out of water. It is no uncommon thing to catch tench weighing two or three pounds; sometimes, in very favourable situations, they are found much heavier. Mr. Alfred Mackrill, the well-known Thames angler, has often taken splendid baskets of tench, including many fish over 4 lb.; his advice, from experience, is, Do not hold the rod when fishing for tench, but only take it up when the float is moving off. The angler should learn the haunts of the tench ere he fishes for him. He should know the depth of the water, and whether the bottom is a clayey, muddy, or gravelly one, for he must fish both close to and on the bottom according to circumstances, and suit his ground-bait

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to the nature of the soil; whole live worms should not be thrown in where the bottom is soft, as they quickly bury themselves. If the bottom is a gravelly one, a ground-bait of clay, carrion gentles, bullock's blood, and chopped worms may be thrown in the day before, and the hook baited with a fine red worm, well secured on a No. 6 or 7 hook, and, if not successful, a wasp-grub or lob may be tried. In a muddy or clayey bottom, later in the year, gentles and garden-slugs will be found good and attractive baits. Sweet honey paste is perhaps the best general bait. Brown-bread paste is much liked by tench. If the pitch is well ground-baited for a couple of days with bread and clay ground-bait (page 49), and a few small pellets of sweet paste thrown in the night before, the angler will assuredly have good sport in the early morning with this paste. Tench feed morning and evening, and all day in warm showery weather, when they will not refuse a snail. The tackle should be strong; the rod should be long (if the banks are much encumbered with weeds) and fitted with running tackle; the foot-line should be of gut, about eight or ten feet long, stained a light green. A quill float should be used. Tench are wary and careful with the bait; they do not gorge it quickly and require time. When the float lies flat it shows they are rising with the bait.* Then the fish may be struck firmly but gently, and when hooked it will be necessary to prevent it from making for the muddy bottom or the weeds, &c. Keep him under your rod, and though he starts spasmodically, as it were, from place to place, he will soon tire. I have only met with tench in a few rivers, except where they were carefully preserved. In many ponds and lakes, however, they are plentiful enough, and afford good sport

* It is more often in bream-fishing that the angler sees his float rise up and fall flat on the water, and the proper time to strike is when the fish begins to move off, which is shown by the float slowly gliding away.

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from July to October. They spawn in the early summer, and are wonderfully prolific.

The BARBEL derives its name from the peculiar beard or wattles which hang about his mouth. Though not one of the best fish for the table, and in this respect much inferior to the tench, yet he is much sought after by anglers in consequence of the sport he affords. They swim in shoals, and love the strong current of a deep river, particularly when it runs over a stony or gravelly bed. Amongst old piles by the side, in the deep currents of bridges, weirs, and locks, they love to lie and feed on the worms, &c., borne down by the current. The strong fins of the barbel enable him to stem rapid streams. In July, August, and September, a good day's barbel-fishing on the Trent or Thames is an event to be remembered. London anglers are particularly skilful in capturing barbel. They use worms, greaves,* gentles, and cheese-paste. The best bait is the lob-worm, well scoured and lively, on a No. 8 or 9 hook. The best time to fish is at night, or in the early morning. When the lob-worm fails, greaves or gentles may be used. What is termed by Trent anglers a corking-float, placed two or three feet deeper than the water, is often used in heavy rapid streams, but when ledgering the angler must learn to depend on his sense of touch if he wishes to become a successful barbel-fisher. The rod should be able to stand a good strain and the gut tackle should be strong but fine, and made of the best undrawn gut. Barbel require time to take the bait, and when struck it should be done sharply. When hooked it will be difficult for him to escape, strong as he is in the water. Let him have plenty of line in deep water, as he will sooner be tired, particularly if you keep a tight rein, and the top of your rod well

* "Greaves," also called "scratchings," is the refuse skin, &c., from the tallow-melters; it is made into cakes by the tallow-chandlers. The best is English cake. It has to be scalded for use as bait, the whitest bits being used for the hook and the rest as ground-bait.

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up. In the Thames a light ledger is the favourite tackle for barbel. Any good fishing-tackle shop will supply it. Do not overdo the ground-baiting. The best ground-bait is that made of greaves, lob-worms, bran, and clay. On the Thames a punt is generally used, which enables the angler to dispense with a long rod. They keep their noses at the bottom, with their heads up stream. In ledgering for barbel the tackle required is a barbel hook on a bottom of two yards of fine stained undrawn gut, a round pistol-bullet perforated is placed on the gut about 18 or 20 inches above the hook and between two shot, which confine it to about 4 or 6 inches of the gut-line; no float is used, as the angler after swinging his bait and line well out into the stream below him winds up all slack line until he feels the bullet, and then, with the rod in the right hand pointing down and across stream and with point held down near the water, he holds the line near the reel in the other hand and can instantly detect the bite even of a dace. When the barbel are "well on" they give a sudden tug which there is no mistaking, and they often clear the hook before the angler can strike it into their leathern jaws. Ledgering for barbel (and many other fish) is capital sport. Small cubes of bread soaked in treacle form a good ledger bait for big roach. A cockroach, water-snail, cheese, and carefully prepared greaves, have been recommended as excellent baits for barbel, which, when caught, is despised by most cooks.

The PERCH may be found almost everywhere, and of almost every size. Dashing, bold, and courageous, they afford the angler capital sport; and notwithstanding his humpy back he is not despicable when the cook has lavished his art on him. In waters that are not much fished, it is not so necessary to be so particular about the nicety and fineness of the tackle in fishing for perch. He is not afraid of a bit of gut, which should be about a yard long, attached to a running line, and armed with a No. 4 or 5

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hook. The size of the hook must, however, depend somewhat on the size of the perch fished for. Even the smallest perch has a large mouth, and will take a large sized bait readily. If a common general rod is used, the short top may be fixed. As a rule, running tackle should always be used for perch, though I have noticed that many perch-fishers in the rural districts of England catch a fair basket of perch without running tackle of any kind. There are many ways of fishing for perch, dependent to a great extent on the size of the river and the size of the fish. In docks or deep water, the "paternoster" should be used.* This species of line derived its name from the hooks being fixed on hollow grooved beads at regular distances, in the same manner as beads are fastened on a rosary used by Roman Catholic devotees. For perch-fishing they may be fastened 6 or 8 inches apart on short stout pieces of gut. In some cases only two hooks are used, the upper one being baited with a minnow or live shrimp, and the lower with a well-scoured marsh worm. When four hooks are used, and the tackle is strong, it is recommended in tidal waters to use a minnow or a gudgeon to bait the lower hook, a fine lob-worm may occupy the next hook, a shrimp the third, and a bunch of gentles the upper or fourth hook. When two hooks only are on the line, a large lob-worm, or two smaller ones, may be placed on the lower hook, and a shrimp on the higher, and with a pear-shaped plummet or bullet at the bottom. It should always be borne in mind that while perch only feed, as a rule, morning and evening in rivers, in all tidal waters they are on the feed at different times, according to the state of the tide, and on the flow and ebb the predatory perch is on the look-out for prey. In open water perch love to lie about millpools, locks, and

* See illustrated description in Mr. Jardine's article, pp. 108 and 109.

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bridges. They love to lie near barges, shipping, and baulks of timber. In more quiet streams they like deep holes where there is an eddy; back-waters with a sandy or gravelly bottom suit them, and in these places there is no better general bait than the well-scoured worm, either red, marsh, or brandling, as described in the Table of Baits. They do not take so well in bright sunny weather, and the angler will find the forenoons and the evening, even in cloudy weather, more suitable for perch-fishing than midday. A windy day is best for perch and pike-fishing, as the ruffled surface moves the float about, making the bait move attractively; it also prevents the fish seeing the angler, as he does when the surface of the water is smooth. There is not much trouble to persuade the perch to bite, and as he hunts in company, when one is captured, there is a great probability of securing the whole shoal. Excellent sport may be had with perch from a half to a pound and a quarter in weight, for though much larger perch are caught, they are by no means common. In the eddies near millstreams you may fish successfully for perch with a paternoster-line, weighted with a bullet to keep down the baits; but as a float would be almost useless, the angler must watch his rod-top to know when he has a bite. Minnows are an attractive bait for perch, and in comparatively tranquil waters sometimes irresistible. The hook must be inserted behind the back fin, or through the upper lip, and the line well weighted about a foot above the bait, to keep it well down. Gudgeon, stone-loach, and frogs have been found effective in attracting perch (see Chapter XII.). I recollect many years ago hearing an old perch-fisher describe a plan of putting a few minnows in a clear bottle nearly full of water, and corking it, leaving a small air-hole, and then sinking it in a river, with a cord attached. These act as a decoy to the neighbouring perch, who are curious to know the why and the

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wherefore of the strange exhibition. I find that Mr. Fitzgibbon (Ephemera) mentions the plan as "poaching" for perch, and that the best way of securing the perch is to bait a paternoster-line with live minnows, and float it by the bottle. Of all the months for perch-fishing, August, September, and October are the best. Some excellent sport is often obtained. In river fishing for perch ground-baiting is not often resorted to, but in long stretches of deep water and in lakes it is necessary to ground-bait if you do not want to lose time. A bundle of mutton-chop bones with a little of the meat left on is said to be a good ground-bait for perch.

In bright hot weather, when the water is clear, a deadly way of killing perch is to cast a well-scoured red-worm on a Stewart tackle, with a fly-rod and line just as in fly-fishing, or a small silver spoon baited with a red-worm or two on the triangle cast among a school of perch and drawn gently away will often prove too attractive for them. If you catch an undersized perch do not cast it back where you intend to fish, but in some other part of the water, as there is undoubtedly some truth in the saying that if you lose a perch the rest of the school will often stop biting. Let the perch always have a few seconds to gorge the bait. When live fresh-water shrimps are used they may be kept alive in damp sand or sandy gravel, or wet grass or hay in a basket.

EELS AND LAMPREYS.—The ordinary bait-fisher rarely bothers himself about these troublesome but toothsome gentry, which are to be found more or less in every river and stream in the United Kingdom I have seen young eels when no thicker than thin grass ascending the Shannon and Fergus in myriads in the spring of the year, wriggling their small bodies over the sluice-gates up the salmon ladder, and over the mill-weirs to the upper and clearer water of the lakes and tributaries. In 1867, the eel-fry, or "eel fare," as it is called, was seen for the first time

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for a long period in the Thames. Eel-weirs were once common, and in many places in Ireland and in the Fen country they are yet preserved, and form no despicable industry. Every angler knows the haunts of the eel, how he hides under big stones, in holes under a bridge, by half-sunk timbers, under projecting roots of trees, and a host of similar places. He is caught at night by "bobbing," that is, by stringing on strong worsted thread large lob-worms with a needle, and tying them in the links with a stout piece of whipcord, at short intervals. These are thrown into the river, either from a boat, lock, or footbridge, and a stout stick being used as a rod, the fisher soon feels the sharp nip of the eel, who bites so hard, so tenaciously, that he submits to be pulled out of the water sooner than lose his hold. Another method is to tie a number of eel-hooks, which are made with metal eyes for the purpose, on to a piece of whipcord, some eight inches apart, bait with lob-worms; tie a piece of lead or bullet to one end, cast it into the stream in a likely place, and fasten the other end by a peg in the bank, or tie it firmly to the weeds, and leave it all night. Another plan is to bait the hook with the worm, tie a piece of stout line (I prefer whipcord) to the hook, and then pull the line through the top ring of a trolling or other stout rod, until the bait is tight to the top; hold the cord and rod together, and place the bait near the haunt of the fish. If the worm is a large one, the eel will not refuse it, but bite greedily. The rod may then be withdrawn. The eel is, however, not yet landed; he has immense muscular force in his tail, which can only be overcome by a steady, strong, but not too strong pull on the line. Gradually he uncurls and permits himself to be pulled out. The moment he is landed put your foot on his body, and sever his backbone with a sharp knife. There is no better way of preventing the thousand contortions and twists of the nimble gentleman round the tackle.

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Anglers who think of laying night-lines for eels should ascertain if they have the right to do so, as in many places it is illegal to fish in this way, and in others is considered as poaching, especially in trout-streams, where fine trout often fall victims to the night-line. It is not generally known, but in the warm months eels do immense destruction at night to spawn, fry, and yearlings of other fish.

Messrs. Gaynor and Son, of Richmond, Surrey, sell excellent osier eel-baskets, and will give instructions in baiting and setting them—a very simple process.

The LAMPREY belongs to the eel tribe, and is caught in large numbers in the Severn and Trent in baskets at weirs. A small lamprey makes a good bait for several kinds of fish, if put on the hook like a worm. Large barbel are especially partial to this bait.

CHAPTER IX

WORM-FISHING FOR TROUT, GRAYLING, SALMON, ETC.

IN the early spring months, when there is as yet but little fly on the rivers, the glorious trout may be lured with the red-worm. Fly-fishers affect to despise this method of fishing as being childish, but it will take all their cunning and skill to succeed in capturing trout by its means in low, clear water It is practised early in March, in shallow streams, where the trout are on the look-out for prey. It is very deadly when the waters are muddied and coloured after a flood. In the hot burning days of July it enables the skilful angler to fill his basket, when all flies would be refused. Worms may be used as a tripping bait, as if borne along by the stream near the bottom, or they may be used with a float, as described in fishing for several coarse fish. In deep pools, under the shade of bushes and trees, they are used instead of natural flies by the bush-fisher. The tackle

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necessary for worm-fishing for trout is similar to that used by ordinary bait-fishers. The rod should be long, flexible, and pliant—one seventeen or eighteen feet will not be found too long, if not unwieldy and beyond the strength of the angler. The running tackle may be the same as before described, with the hook whipped on with red silk. The worm must be placed on the hook as before described, or by the excellent method recommended by Mr. Stewart, who suggests that three small hooks should be tied on one strand of gut, one above another, and the worm hitched on them in a serpentine form, like the serpent in the Laocoon, leaving the head and tail loose to play. This is no doubt an effective and attractive bait with large fish, but it scarcely compensates the angler for his extra trouble and risk of the worm breaking away when casting. Baiting with the double worm (page 41) will be found nearly as effective and less troublesome. Different authorities argue in different ways with respect to shotting the line. Unless the worm is a large one, sinkers will be found necessary, particularly if there is much wind. Plenty of worms are indispensable; they are best kept in a flannel bag, which may be fitted with a loop to hang on a button of the coat. The casting of the bait is of great importance. I have had good sport when fishing both up and down stream. The angler in this must suit his convenience and the state of the water. There must be no jerking of the bait; it may be sent forward, so as to fall lightly and athwart the stream, and be drawn gradually to the side. The line must be kept out of the water as much as possible. This is easier done fishing down-stream than up, and, if the angler can keep himself out of sight, perhaps the advantages will be on his side, as trout are generally on the look-out at the head of the stream in the eddies, and scours for prey coming down. A bite is easily distinguished by the sudden stoppage of the line. But

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by far the most deadly bait in bright water is to wade quietly up-stream, casting the worm up-stream into the stickles and allowing it to be carried down by the stream exactly as if there were no line attached to it. When you see the line stop, wait a second; if it is a trout you will feel a tug, then strike. No shot should be used in up-stream clear water worm-fishing. In swift waters the bait is generally swallowed at once, in deeper and quieter waters the trout seem to play with it ere gorging it. It is difficult to know when to strike under these circumstances, and it is certainly better to wait until the line has received one or two tugs than to be too hasty. When the water is still and clear, every artifice must be tried to keep out of sight. Kneeling will be found to be a good practice where the banks are open, and it is best to keep on the shallow side of the stream, opposite to where the trout generally lie. The angler must be up early if he wishes to be successful. A dry July morning, or one when the rain is warm, will be found suitable for the sport—the lull after a shower. In calms, the trout lie in the eddying rush at the head of the pools; when the surface is rippled by the wind, they lie at the tail of the pool. In deep streamy depths, behind stones, in eddies they may be found watching for their prey. In shallow water great care is requisite, as the trout are often at the very feet of the angler. On days when trout will take the worm they will also take freely a very small natural minnow cast like a fly up-stream and spun down. When August is advanced, trout begin to refuse the worm in clear streams. In flooded streams, where the water is discoloured, trout leave the deep current, and are to be found in the shallows, in the quiet water, at the tail of streams. The quiet edges of pools and streams in these circumstances should be fished, and trout will take the worm during the whole of the season in coloured water.

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Trout may be taken with caddis-bait, and two or three fresh-water shrimps will often entice him. He may also be caught by spinning with the minnow.

In hot weather when trout roam about near the surface, a well-scoured redworm, cast gently on to the surface of a lake, or pool, or a river, just as a fly is cast, will often secure a brace or two of good fish.

The GRAYLING, a very handsome game fish of the salmon family, is not found in many rivers in this country; it rises freely at natural flies and will take any fly a trout will, also a small redworm in slightly flooded waters. They will also bite at the grasshopper, and do not despise a gentle. A taking bait is to dress a No. 6 eyed hook, on the shank of which a pennyweight of lead is cast, chrysalis shape, cover with green silk with a split straw on either side, ribbed with orange or yellow silk. On the bend of the hook a real grasshopper is placed with the legs clipped off at the first joints. The angler should use a small float, made of a couple of inches of the white part of a duck-quill. With a long rod drop the bait into the water and let it sink to the bottom. When the bait touches the bottom it must be jerked along as if the grasshopper were jumping a few inches off the bottom and so kept continually moving. Wheatley, who describes this deadly method of fishing fully, says, "Watch the action of the float with the greatest care, and on the slightest deviation you observe it make from its direct course, strike, not hard, but with great quickness, Never allow the bait to be still; yet let the jerks, though sharp, be short—proceeding from the wrist, not the whole arm, as the whole arm will be liable to drive the bait too far at once."

In winter, in frosty weather grayling will very freely take a well-scoured redworm fished with a float so that it swims down the stream a foot from the bottom.

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There are times, particularly in the early part of the season, when the waters are muddy and high, when salmon will bite greedily at worms and other lures of the bait-fisher. Many anglers—and their opinion is entitled to every respect—are of opinion that it is unsportsmanlike to catch salmon with any other bait than the artificial fly. It certainly does not possess the charm that fly-fishing does, but at the same time it affords capital sport when the fish will not rise at the fly. The tempting lob-worm may be used as a tripping bait in the same manner as that recommended for trout: the line must be leaded to keep down the bait. The salmon when hooked must be played and manœuvred in the same manner as when fishing with the artificial fly.

One of the best baits for salmon is a sand-eel found in the sand on the seashore. An artificial bait has been made of white leather, with a dark-coloured stripe down the back. Salmon may also be taken with prawns, lob-worms, shrimps, limpets, &c. Salmon are also taken by spinning the minnow and gudgeon. The process is the same as that described in the chapters on Trolling and Spinning for Pike.

Before I proceed, perhaps I had in this place better caution the tyro against the mischances likely to arise from an awkward use of the gaff-hook. This ugly-looking implement is, as before described, similar to a large barbless fish-hook fixed in a handle, varying, according to circumstances, from 18 inches to 4 feet in length. It is a useful implement enough when skilfully managed, which is not always the case. The fish should be brought to the side carefully, and if it is not possible to bring him to a shelving shore, to the most suitable place, and the gaff should be slipped underneath the fish and carefully driven in beneath the pectoral fin by a sharp pull, if you cannot insert the point beneath the gills. Some salmon-anglers gaff their fish by passing the gaff over instead of under the fish so that the

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point is opposite the side of the fish away from the angler when the stroke is made. A useful form of gaff is telescopic and made of metal, the sections being square in shape so that there is no fear of their twisting round at a critical moment. The screw of the gaff should fit well and lightly into the handle into a solid brass ferrule—not one with a brazed-in head, as these break out in lifting a heavy fish. The best gaff of all is one that is securely lashed to a strong malacca cane or bit of sound ash. The point of the gaff should be protected when not in actual use by sticking it into a cork. Those anglers who reside, or are staying near the seashore, will find a few suggestive hints for the employment of their time, and the use of their bait-tackle, in the chapter on Sea Fishing.

CHAPTER X

HOW TO FISH FOR PIKE—TROLLING—THE TACKLE, GEORGE-HOOKS, TRACE, BAITS, ETC.

UNDER the broad and generic term of "Fishing in Mid-water," I propose to treat of trolling, spinning, sinking, and roving with the dead, live, and artificial bait for the pike, and of spinning with the minnow for perch, trout, and salmon. I put the pike in the place of honour, because those ingenious combinations of hooks and baits were specially invented for his capture.

In addition to reading these general remarks the young angler should study the special article on Pike Fishing, by Mr. Alfred J. Jardine, commencing at p. 92.

It is a tempting subject this fishing in mid-water. Every troller can give you some anecdote or other of the omnivorous appetite of the pike, or has some pet bait with which

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to catch him. I can only say in this place that pike spawn in March and April; that they deposit their ova amid aquatic plants and weeds in shallow places and dykes, and then return to deep water, leaving their young to care for themselves, which they certainly manage to do from a very early age—their principal enemies being their own parents, who, when pressed for food, do not hesitate to bolt one of their own species, though it perhaps prefers the fry of dace, roach, or gudgeon. A hundred anecdotes rise up in the memory of their seizing every living and moving thing from the bowl of a spoon to the hand of a child. I can only indicate the interesting nature of this subject, and refer the curious reader to Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell's "Book of the Pike," which is beyond dispute the most complete treatise on the subject in our voluminous angling literature. I leave this subject and confine myself to the mode of capture, merely remarking that as an edible the pike is by no means a despicable fish.

The necessary outfit of a troller is somewhat different from that of the bottom and fly fisher: in fact it should be special, if success is to be achieved or desired. The rod, for instance, should be light, firm, strong, and easily wielded. If it could be so arranged as to be lengthened when fishing with the live bait, a rod of twelve feet in length, made either of bamboo or hickory, would answer every purpose. I like a fourteen-foot rod, but I know my case is an exceptional one. The top joint of a good trolling-rod should be made of greenheart, and whole cane or greenheart are best adapted for the other joints by the common consent of the best trollers. Three tops of different lengths and elasticity are necessary, however, to suit the varieties of trolling and the different width of rivers, and they should vary six inches in length. The butt of the rod should be fitted with a knob of rubber or wood to rest in the groin. The

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rings of a trolling or spinning-rod are much larger than those on a general or fly-rod. Rings of various kinds are used, but, when solid rings are used, they should jut out firmly from the side of the rod, and are formed of brass wire, or of grooved steel rings held in a wire ring, or perhaps as good as any are the large steel hoops of the well-known "Snake" pattern. The ring should be nearly half an inch in diameter. Mr. Pennell says $\frac{7}{16}$ths of an inch for the middle joints, and $\frac{5}{8}$ths of an inch for the bottom ring, which is of the pronged shape, so as to prevent as much as possible the line hitching over it. The top ring should be of grooved steel revolving in a brass support. From nine to twelve rings are necessary, according to the length of the rod, including the top and bottom rings. A well-seasoned hazel-rod, fitted with solid rings, will answer for a trolling-rod. The best cheap rod is one made of a long bamboo cane, similar to those hung out at the fishing-tackle shops. The rings should be smooth and finely polished, so as not to chafe the line.

The best lines are those known as eight-plait dressed silk, and should be from 50 to 80 yards long. With respect to the reel: I have before mentioned the essentials of a good reel, and those remarks apply with great force to the reel of a trolling-rod. It should be of sufficient size to hold the line easily. It should wind by a handle fixed in the side-plate, be fitted with a check and the break-spring, so as to prevent the line overrunning. All fishing-tackle makers now supply Nottingham plain, optional check, and "combination" casting-reels, and no angler should grudge the time necessary to learn how to use one of these reels.

The troller also requires a bait-kettle, gaff, and one of the excellent fishing-knives sold by Farlow & Co., which has been made from Mr. Pennell's design, which combines a disgorger, minnow-needle, baiting-needle, and a pricker for fly-

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dressing, besides a corkscrew and a stout useful blade. A series of pike-hooks, spinning flights, traces, swivels, as hereafter described, will also be necessary. I will commence with trolling proper, as it is generally understood, with the gorge-bait. This form of fishing is not now allowed on many waters as it is considered near akin to poaching, as all fish, large or small, taken on it have to be killed. Its use now is only considered "fair" where you want to destroy pike out of a trout or other preserve, and for that reason only is a description given of it in the present edition of this work.

TROLLING WITH THE GORGE-BAIT.—The first essential for this method is the gorge-hook, which is an instrument of somewhat deadly appearance, as will be seen by the annexed engraving (Fig. 23). A is a double hook, brazed back to back; B is the lead cast over the shank of the hook, and enclosing a twisted wire shank, which protrudes more or less, and ends in a loop, C, to which three or four feet of gimp is attached. Gimp, I may mention, is highly essential in trolling, as gut is quickly frayed and cut by the weeds and repeated casting. There are two or three cautions necessary to be given to the young troller. It is necessary that sufficient lead should be attached to the hook to sink the bait without the addition of any further sinkers. The lead should not touch the bend of the hook, as is sometimes the case, but should be left as in the engraving, A, so that the lips of the bait may close over it, as at F.. To bait the hook, the loop of the gimp, E, is placed in the eye of the baiting-needle, G. The needle is then passed through the mouth of the bait, and brought out as near the centre of the tail as possible. The needle is then passed sideways through the tail at H, about the third of an inch, or less, from the end, and this, when drawn tight, so that the mouth of the fish rests upon the bend of the hook, forms the half-knot shown at C, by passing the

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needle through the loop. This plan is now generally adopted in preference to the older plan of tying the tail with white silk to the gimp, and stitching up the mouth of

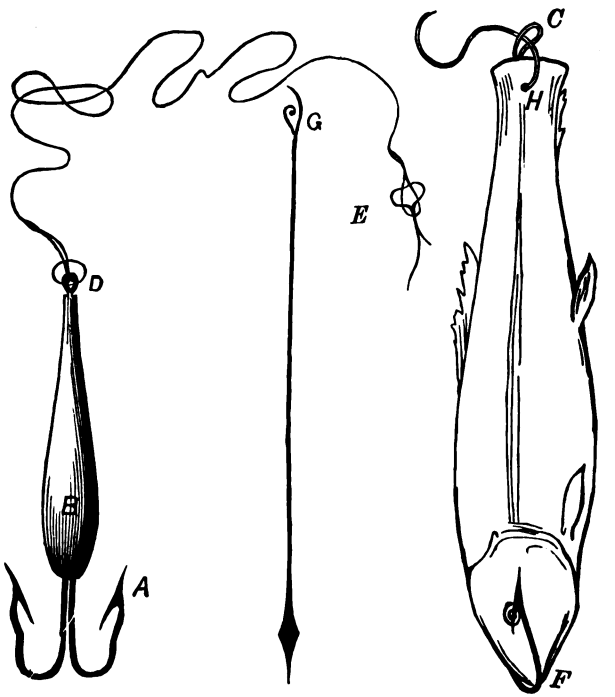

FIG. 23.

the fish. It will be seen that the tail of the fish is cut short, as shown at H.

Another form of dead-bait pike-tackle has been designed by Mr. R. B. Marston, editor of the *Fishing Gazette*, to do away with the whole process of *gorge* bait-fishing for pike, while retaining the same deadly method of fishing; it is called the "Marston dead-bait snap-tackle" (see illus-

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tration in Mr. Jardine's chapter on Pike Fishing) and is made by Messrs. Hardy Bros. of Alnwick. With this tackle you strike directly you feel a fish has taken the bait, consequently you hook him in the mouth and are not obliged to kill him if he is undersize, as you must do with the old gorge-bait, which, as its name implies, is gorged by the fish.

One of the most deadly styles of pike-fishing has been made popular of late years by its great success in the hands of that champion pike-angler, Mr. Alfred Jardine. It is simple in the extreme, consisting of a single sneck bend hook on about 8 or 10 inches of gimp and 4 ft. of fine stained salmon-gut, with a pear-shaped plummet the size of an acorn at the end and a loop in the gut about 16 inches above the plummet. The single hook on gimp is fastened to the gut-loop and the tackle is fastened to the fine dressed silk reel-line. Then a lively dace is secured by passing the hook through both lips, the square shape of the fairly large sneck-hook enabling the dace to breathe freely. Mr. Jardine uses a light but strong cane pike-rod and casts the bait twenty to forty yards in any direction he pleases with the greatest precision. Directly the cast is made the line is drawn in a little and the rod-point lifted, and this process is repeated until all the line is pulled in, when a fresh cast is made. Should a pike take the bait—preferably a 4½in. or 5in. dace—he is allowed about two minutes to run with it and then gently struck or rather tightened on, and a tight strain kept on him. A 20-pound pike hooked in the mouth on a single hook in this way gives splendid sport. Mr. Jardine * is of course a perfect master of the art of playing a fish, and very few pike-anglers would think of using such very fine tackle as he does. As in this style of fishing you search every bit of the water, if the fish are inclined to feed at

* Since these lines were written, Mr. Jardine has very kindly written a chapter on Pike Fishing for this work. See p. 92 and after.—Ed.

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all you will have sport. It is well to have the plummet fastened on a short length of finer gut, so that if it gets entangled it will break off and you only lose a small part of your tackle.

The use of spring-gorge or other hooks which spring open when a fish is struck, is now quite properly considered as unsportsmanlike as trimmering or ottering or crosslining.

The following description of his most recent improvements in leads and swivels for the spinning-trace are taken by his kind permission from Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell's "Modern Improvements in Fishing Tackle," * a little work without which no angler's library can be said to be "complete." Mr. Pennell deserves the thanks of all anglers for the many valuable improvements and refinements he has made in tackle of all kinds.

MR. CHOLMONDELEY PENNELL'S IMPROVED PIKE TACKLE

"I must not eviscerate my 'Book of the Pike' † by reproducing here all the little matters in which, from time to time, I have endeavoured to improve the various descriptions of tackle used in spinning, trolling, and live-baiting—the more so as most of these are well known and have been already for some time before the public; but as, since the last edition of the 'Book of the Pike' was published, I have made one or two considerable further improvements in spinning flights, I may perhaps not inappropriately briefly notice these. The most generally important, as it appeals to all classes of pike-spinners—novice and 'past master' alike—is the 'straight reverse' hook for crooking, and keeping crooked, the tail of the spinning-bait.

"The diagrams represent the most commonly used sizes, bare and lapped on, of the 'straight reverse' hook. This hook is both easier to adjust than my original curved reverse hook, and also makes the bait last much longer and spin more brilliantly. The second barb

* London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

† Fourth Edition: Routledge and Sons, Broadway, Ludgate.

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was the ingenious addition of Messrs. Farlow, who keep all these flights—as well as the traces—in stock, made from my patterns.

"Of flights, all sizes may of course be made to suit special require-

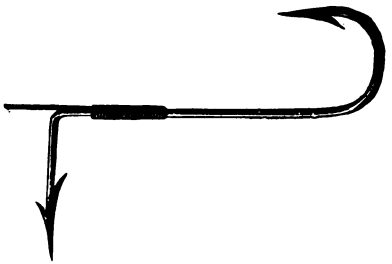

FIG. 24.—Pennell "Straight Reverse and Tail Hooks," as attached to Flight. Size for Medium Flight.

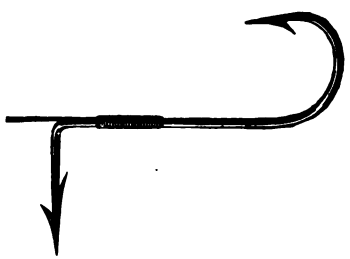

FIG. 25.—Size for Small Flight.

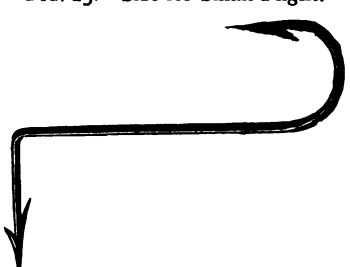

FIG. 26.—Straight Reverse and Tail Hook, Bare.

ments or individual taste, but those shown in the engravings, and particularly Fig. 25, are applicable to the greatest number of ordinary waters and ordinary baits.

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FIG. 27.—Small-sized Spinning Flight.

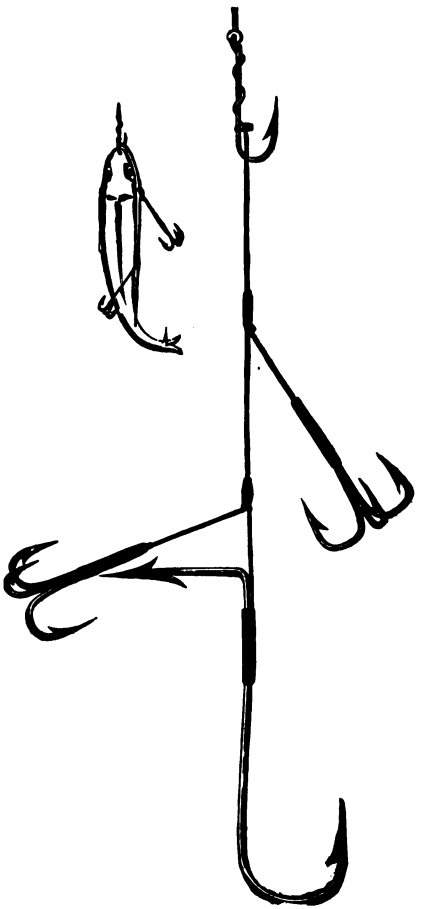

FIG. 28.—Larger-sized Spinning Flight.

PENNELL SPINNING TACKLE.

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"Fig. 27.—This flight is suitable for a small-sized gudgeon, dace, bleak, chub, or trout, 4½ *to* 5 *inches long*. It is adapted particularly for very fine pike-spinning or spinning for Thames trout.

"The small figure to the right at the top represents the appearance of the bait when attached to the flight.

"Fig. 28.—This flight is what may be termed a medium size, though I rarely use any larger myself. It is suited for a largish gudgeon, or for a small dace, &c., 5½ to 6 inches long.

"There is also a still larger size made—No. 3—not figured here, adapted to a heavier bait, say a dace of 6¾ to 7¼ inches long.

"PIKE-SPINNING TRACES.

"Many years ago I published in the *Field* the diagram of a lead intended to obviate the spinner's *bête noire*, 'kinking.' Kinking is solely the result of the non-acting of the swivels, thus allowing the twisting motion of the bait, instead of being confined to the lower part of the trace, to extend upwards to the reel-line.

"To remedy this, I changed the position of the lead, so that instead of being evenly balanced, by the trace passing through a hole up the middle, the centre of gravity was shifted to a point below,

FIG. 29.—Pennell "Hook Swivel."

thus creating a 'block on the line,' above which the 'twist' could not pass, and obliging the swivels to do their work.

"This notion was at once taken up, and numerous were the patterns of lead designed to perfect the idea, the journal in which my letter was published leading the way with the *Field* lead, which has again been varied over and over again. I myself made more variations than anybody, but still could never feel sure that the possible limit of perfection had been reached, having regard to the numerous points that had to be considered—such as 'weed-catching,' conspicuousness in the water—and, above all, that the paramount essential of a genuine and effective 'block' should be thoroughly fulfilled.

"One point soon became plain to me, viz., that in order to give the system fair-play the correct position for the swivels was close below the lead—just at the point, that is, where the *vis inertiæ* of the lead was likely to exert its influence upon them in the most direct manner. Then, after further experiments, I found that two swivels joined into one had, for some reason, a much more certain and

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reliable effect than the same two swivels separate; and, finally, in order to secure the utmost economy of time and convenience in changing flights, baits, &c., I designed a 'hook-swivel'—now the property of Messrs. Farlow—which I believe combines in the simplest possible form the essentials of such an appliance—*i.e.*, small and sightly; instantaneously attachable to, and detachable from, the line when wanted; impossible to become detached from it under any circumstances when not wanted. It is hardly necessary to point out to those who have tried them that none of the other existing hook-swivels fulfil the whole of these conditions; whilst several can hardly be said to fulfil any one of them.

"The engraving—repeated from p. 130, to save the reader the

FIG. 30.—Non-kinking Lead, and Hook Double-Swivel.

trouble of referring back—shows the form of lead, with hook-swivels attached, which appears to me on the whole to possess the greatest number of advantages with the fewest—or, as I might rather say, without any—disadvantages. It is neat, cannot catch in the weeds, and by being made with wire loops in one piece and the swivels joined on, is not only calculated to outlast a score of leads and swivels attached in the old-fashioned manner, but also saves a great deal of time to the tackle-maker, both amateur and professional.

"Attached to the line as I shall presently describe, it is, I have no doubt, the best form of the under-hanging lead that has ever been elaborated—this I say, my own special pattern notwithstanding. The lead figured is the outcome of patient consideration on the part of Messrs. Farlow, working on my previous models and on the pattern already referred to as the *Field* lead—the *Field* lead having been again modified in various points by Mr. H. S. Thomas, in his clever book, 'The Rod in India.'

"In order, however, to do full justice to this lead, it is important that the upper part of the trace—whether of gut or gimp—should be looped to the wire at the top end of the lead exactly in the manner shown in the cut (marked A). By the gut or gimp loop being thus attached the plane of the horizontal line is thrown slightly *higher* (in other words, the centre of gravity is further lowered), very greatly ncreasing the efficiency and twist-resisting power of the lead, whilst offering no projection to disturb the water or catch in weeds.

"Let me urge upon any of my readers who intend trying this lead

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to insist absolutely upon attention being paid to this apparently most trivial, but really most important, point.

"If extra weight be required, it can be very conveniently and expeditiously gained by the addition, above the fixed lead, of a temporary coil of lead wire. To apply this I found the best plan was to twist it first round a hairpin or a fine baiting-needle, laid on the trace (and, of course, including the trace itself); then, drawing out the pin, the lead wire can be tightened in easily in regular coils by twisting with the finger and thumb.

"As regards the material of the trace itself, I generally use below the lead 3 or 4 feet of salmon gut, and then a few inches of *fine* gimp between that and the flight—the actual flight itself, except under special circumstances, being also dressed on fine gimp. The gut links should be knotted together by the Buffer Knot described at page 125. This is most important, as with a stiff rod and the sudden sharp stroke necessary in spinning, the gut, if tied in any other manner, is very likely to break.

"Several attempts have lately been made to adapt fine twisted wire, specially annealed, to the purposes of spinning traces. I can conceive that they might prove very successful for the portion of the trace above the leads, but since, some years ago, I gave up experimenting myself in this direction with twisted copper wire, I have not had any practical experience on the subject, so that I can offer no opinion worth having one way or the other.

"It must be said, however, that their appearance is all in their favour. I have before me a spinning trace in thickness equal to the finest gimp, composed entirely of 'Dr. Collis' patent steel wire,' for which Messrs. Little & Co., Haymarket, London, are the agents. The steel, which in its manufactured form is of a grey colour, is tempered in hot sand before twisting, and it takes a good deal of 'scientifically applied' effort to succeed in effecting a fracture. Dr. Collis' wire ought to be especially suitable for Mahseer fishing.

"The same remark applies to Messrs. Farlow's 'Annealed twisted wire,' of which the editor of the *Fishing Gazette* says:

"'We feel perfectly certain that this annealed twisted wire will be found to meet a great want, viz., a material of great strength, fineness, and hardness to resist teeth of pike and eels. Wire has been used before now, but in single strands; this twisted wire is a great improvement.'"

CASTING THE PIKE-BAIT.—The casting of the bait is an operation requiring some attention and skill. On the Trent

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trollers cast the bait directly from the reel, which necessitates considerable practice to avoid overrunning. As was remarked previously when referring to this style of fishing, the best plan is to watch an adept and get him to give you a few lessons. The more common plan is to uncoil sufficient line from the reel to reach the distance you intend to cast, and let it lie free at your feet. Hold the rod in the right hand, and rest the butt against the hip. With your left hand draw the bait to within a yard or so of the end of the rod, allow it to swing to and fro in the direction you wish to cast, then with a regular sweep of the rod cast the bait to the right or left as desired, withdrawing your left hand at the same time, and the line will run freely through the rings as far as it has been uncoiled. This method of casting is the same in spinning as in trolling proper. As a rule, short casts are preferred to long ones, and the troller should bear in mind that the bait should rove about whilst the line is being drawn in by the left hand by short and gentle pulls. Recollect you are fishing in mid-water, and your bait should be kept thereabouts in water of medium depth; if very deep, nearer the surface than the bottom. The casts should be made somewhat up and from you, fishing the portion of the river nearest you first, and then the more distant spots. If possible, the fish should enter the water head-downwards, as if making a plunge, but this is scarcely possible when a long line is cast. The runs between the weeds should be carefully fished. The bait should not be lifted from the water until brought close to the troller's feet. Forty, fifty, and sixty yards is not an uncommon distance to cast a gorge-bait; long distances, however, are likely to injure the bait, and the less experienced angler casting half these distances is likely to meet with better success.

Suddenly the angler finds his bait checked—it may be a

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weed, possibly it is a fish. A few gentle tugs, &c., but with somewhat of a wrenching motion, tell that the pike is obtaining a firm hold of the bait; slacken your line in the meanwhile, and see that there is plenty uncoiled from the reel. A slight check may be given to the bait, either to make it appear that it is resisting somewhat the treatment it is receiving, or to see if it is a weed or a fish. If the latter, do not hurry him; a few minutes, from five to ten, must be allowed him to gorge the bait, as he generally seizes it in the middle first, and when "pouched," he generally moves off to his favourite haunt. If the dead-bait snap-tackle is used strike at once.

When hooked, the fish may make violent efforts to escape, then a tight hold should be kept on him—of course, giving line off the reel if necessary, and recovering it as soon as possible. Keep him out of the weeds and bushes at any risk, or you will lose both tackle and fish. It will be better to risk losing the latter than both. When thoroughly exhausted, he may be brought to land; float him on his side, or he may still give you trouble, particularly if he gets entangled among weeds. A gaff, or large landing net, is perhaps the best assistant the troller can have to lift the fish out of the water; but beware of his teeth—for they are very sharp. The best plan of extracting the bait is to make a small slit in the throat where the hook is, disengage the trace from the line, and draw it through the aperture.

With respect to baits, the best of all is a gudgeon. A bleak or dace are also useful, particularly in murky weather, and when the water is discoloured. In clear weather and bright water a smaller bait may be used than in full streams and dull weather. Baits should, if possible, be kept alive until about to be used, when they may be killed by a blow or two at the back of the head. When dead, they are best

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kept in bran. A cloth kept damp also preserves their freshness. Do not handle the bait too much.

Sometimes it is necessary to preserve the bait; brine is used in country districts, but spirits of wine or strong gin will answer the purpose best, if they can be nicely laid flat, and the air kept from them. Mr. Pennell suggests that they might be preserved in sardine air-tight cases, and sold at the tackle-shops.

Pike may be caught in almost any weather when a breeze is blowing, from July to the middle of February; and the river haunts of pike are under the shade of water-lily leaves, near banks of weeds, sedges, &c., in bends and bays opposite to deep waters where its prey abound, or where an eddy is likely to carry down its food. In winter it prefers backwaters and eddies, and in summer I have watched them just outside the run of streams.

CHAPTER XI

SPINNING FOR PIKE—NEW TACKLE—THE PENNELL FLIGHT—SINKING AND ROVING—FISHING WITH THE SNAP-TACKLE, ETC.

ANOTHER, and indeed the most scientific, method of angling in mid-water for pike, is spinning. It has all the advantages of the old-fashioned trolling, and has the additional attraction of affording much better sport. It may be said to be to ordinary trolling what fly-fishing is to bottom-fishing. It is to be preferred on all waters where there are not too many weeds, bushes, snags, or similar obstructions in the river. The trolling-rod will answer the purpose of the spinner—indeed, they are identical for all practical purposes. The reel and reel-line are the same; the bait is,

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however, not only a different matter, but it is differently presented on a different class of hooks. The veriest tyro in angling must have seen in the tackle-shop windows imitation fish of various sizes, and of still more diverse material, armed with the most formidable-looking hooks standing out, hanging to arms of wire and other contrivances, until the idea suggests itself how a fish would venture near them.

Let me explain the principle of the spinning tackle. The line is fitted with two, and sometimes more, swivels, which, as before described, must be kept well oiled, so as to revolve freely. The bait is attached to what is termed a flight of hooks, or "spinning flight," in such a manner as to twist or turn in the water like a thing of life, as it is moved to and fro, suggesting the idea of a glittering, splendid fish, wounded, or partially disabled, yet attempting to escape. This flight is attached to a length of gimp, to which a lead is attached as a sinker, connected with the swivels and the reel-line. It is cast similarly to the gorge-bait, but hooks the fish in an entirely different manner, which will be better understood by a reference to the representation of the Pennell and other spinning flights given in this work.

The trace is made in ordinary cases of stained gimp, but "fine fishers" use half a dozen lengths of salmon gut joined together by the knot described in the chapter on lines. One of the leads shown in the previous chapter, or on pages 99 and 100, is attached about halfway along this line. The old traces were always fitted with four, five, and even six swivels. With the improved form of lead, two or at most three, kept oiled and free from rust, will be found sufficient. Farlow, 191 Strand, London, furnishes these flights complete, as above described; also later improvements in them and special

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leads and swivels invented by Mr. Pennell and already referred to.

The best of spinning-baits is a silvery dace, but a gudgeon, bleak, or sprat can be used. Select one to suit the size of tackle you are using.

Artificial baits are so numerous that I need not do more than direct the reader's attention to them. Messrs. Bernard, of Church Place, Piccadilly, Farlow & Co., Carter & Peek, Watson & Hancock, and in fact most of our best fishing-tackle makers, sell special spinning-baits.

The spoon-bait is used in many sizes in different localities. It usually has the triangles attached by split-rings, but the latter should never be used, as they rust so soon. A bit of red feather on the tail triangle of a spoon-bait often adds greatly to its killing powers. Red wool is often used, but feather is better as it dries more quickly and does not cause rust. Archimedean fish and spoons may be recommended generally when the real fish is not to be obtained.

The gigantic mass of wool and feathers, known as the pike-fly, is used in some waters, particularly lakes, in the same manner as salmon-flies. The wings are usually formed of the eye-feathers of a peacock's tail, and it is used with a double hook in bright weather.

A description of the method of paternostering for pike with a live bait is given on pages 79 and 105. Pike anglers are also indebted to Mr. Jardine for improvements in the tackle used for float-fishing for pike with a live bait, a very killing and sportsmanlike method if the now well-known Jardine snap-tackle is used. There is no necessity to use a baiting needle, as one of the hooks is passed through the base of the back fin near the first ray. A *Fishing Gazette* pike-float (see p. 94) will be found very convenient, as it can be easily put on or taken off the trace without unfastening it; the line is slipped through a

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groove to the centre of the float and then jammed against the side of the hole by a wooden plug.*

Dace are generally preferred by pike anglers both for live bait and for spinnimg. A gold or silver fish is adapted for murky water and dull days. A gudgeon and even a minnow may be used with advantage on proportionately-sized tackle. The bait is suspended in midwater by means of a sinker and a float, which may be one large cork, or a series of smaller corks, varnished green and strung on to the line an inch or two apart. The advantages claimed for these are, that they permit the bait to rove about more freely than a larger one, and are not so liable to get entangled amongst the weeds; but the greater advantage is the convenience they offer for fishing a long way from the bank, as they act somewhat in the manner of a tumbler float. The bait are best kept alive in a bait-can, described in Chapter IV., and should be taken out by a small hoop-net.

In striking the fish, either in spinning or with snap-tackle, the action should be more in the nature of a firm tightening of the line on the fish than a jerk of any kind. In the chapter on spinning with the minnow, I have embodied some general hints on the subject. Huxing and trimmers are unworthy of the name of sport, however useful they may be for the purpose of capturing fish.

* Since these lines were written, Mr. Alfred Jardine has kindly undertaken to write a special description of pike-fishing for this work. I have added it to this chapter.—ED.

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ANGLING FOR PIKE, WITH DESCRIPTIONS AND ILLUSTRATIONS OF TACKLE.

BY ALFRED JARDINE

THE antiquity of pike-angling is beyond dispute, for Ausonius, a Latin poet, who lived A.D. 309, wrote of *Esox lucius—i.e.*, the pike—as the

> Wary luce, 'midst wrack and rushes hid,
> The scourge and terror of the scaly brood.

And Ossian, who was born during the fourth century of the Christian era, in his writings describes trolling for pike. But the first authentic record in this country of pike-fishing, with instructions how to make rods and tackle wherewith to angle for pike, is to be found in the "Boke of St. Albans," written by Dame Juliana Berners, of Sopwell Priory, about A.D. 1486. The rod she recommended was an implement at least fourteen feet long, the "staffe," or butt, measuring "a fathom and a half," of the thickness of an "armgrete"—*i.e.*, as thick as a man's arm; and the joints were to be bound with stout "hopis of yren" (iron hoops), which rod seems to have been a "cross" between a clothes-prop and a hop-pole.

In this and the next chapter I propose to treat of "snap fishing" with live and dead baits, "spinning," "paternostering," and "ledgering;" also to specify and describe, as far as space permits, the kinds of rods and tackles, &c., necessary in the pursuit of this delightful branch of the art of angling.

The pike angler should equip himself with perfect rods, reel, lines, and tackle. By a *perfect* rod I mean one that is strong, light in weight, stiff, but with flexibility. Some anglers give preference to greenheart, but it is a treacherous wood, and liable to fracture, unless the joints are *rent* instead

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of sawn from the plank; the latter being a common practice with cheap rods. Hickory is tough, and, like lancewood, much too heavy, to my way of thinking. My favourite pike-rods are those constructed of East India cane, and from 11ft. to 12ft. in length, with two interchangeable tops, which pack into the butt, after the pattern of the "Jardine" Rod (Fig. 31); the short top is for "snap fishing" and ledgering, the long one for "spinning" and "paternostering"; the rings are from $\frac{5}{8}$in. diameter at the butt to $\frac{1}{2}$in. at the top joint, and should be "guard rings," so that the line cannot foul or twist round them, and accidental tangles easily pass through, a matter of great importance when playing a heavy fish.

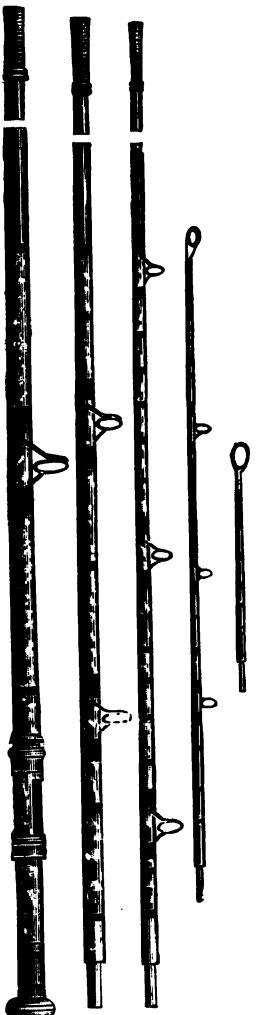

FIG. 31.—"Jardine" Pike Rod.

Nottingham reels with adjustable checks are excellent for pike-fishing (Fig. 32); so are metal reels, also vulcanite, but all must have large narrow barrels so as to wind up line very quickly. A pike reel should not be less than $3\frac{1}{2}$in. diameter, which is large enough

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to hold 100 yards of line. The line may be No. 0 or No. 1 gauge in size, but should be of pure silk and *plaited*, not twisted; thick lines are cumbrous, and not necessarily

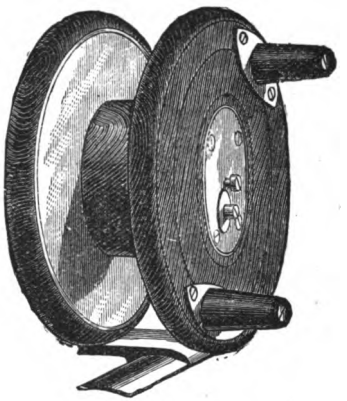

FIG. 32.

strong; they should be waterproofed with a dressing of linseed oil, mastic varnish, and gold size, and thoroughly dried; lines thus prepared last for years, and are always supple.

For "snap-fishing" the tackle required will be a float

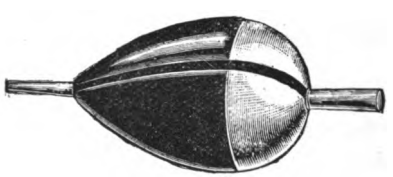

FIG. 33.—"Fishing Gazette" Float.

about the size of a small hen's egg. The *Fishing Gazette* float is a capital one (Fig. 33); or the "Jardine Duplex" (Fig. 34), with interchangeable red and white tops, the red

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for fishing foamy water, below a weir, for instance; but if dark water or the shades of evening approach, the white top is used.

The "trace," which is attached to the line, should be

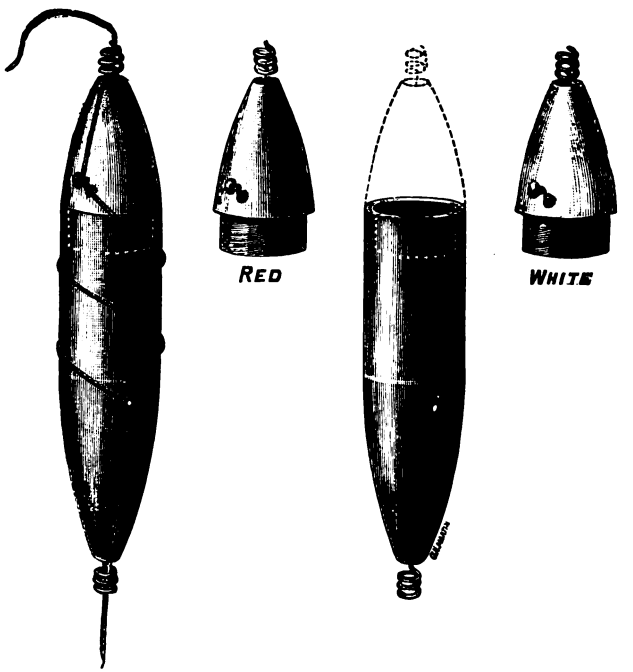

FIG. 34.—"Jardine" Duplex Float.

about 4ft. in length, and may be of gimp, No. o gauge, or of very stout salmon gut, the latter is preferable; but if gimp, it should be copper-coloured or stained bronze, brass being much too bright in the water. Salmon-gut traces, stained a dark green or olive, are best for all kinds of pike-fishing; on the loop at the end of the trace must be a "pipe lead" and

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a buckle swivel. A lead with a brass wire loop through it, to which the baited snap hooks can be easily attached, is a convenient lead.

The snap tackle in general request is known as the "Jardine Snap," but, as many shops sell tackles by that name which are not the correct pattern, I now describe how the tackle should be constructed. Two No. 11 hooks and one No. 2, *longer from bend to barb* than shown in illustration, are brazed together, and bound on the copper or bronze gimp; another triangle of two No. 11 hooks and one No. 8, with small metal eyes brazed on the shank, through which the gimp is threaded and twisted round the shank, thus

FIG. 35.—"Jardine" Snap Tackle.

the hooks can be adjusted to the size or length of the baits (Fig. 35). The No. 8 hook is placed under the bait's dorsal fin, and the little No. 2 in the upper corner of the gill-cover—the hooks lie close to the bait, and are no impediment to its swimming. These tackles can be obtained in three or four sizes.

Dace are the best of all baits—being bright, and therefore tempting, lures; they should not be lifted out of the water too frequently, for that weakens, and prevents them working properly: if difficult to procure, roach and large gudgeon answer very well. Snap-fishing is largely patronised by Thames anglers, and I know of numerous large pike being caught by that method, many of them ranging from 15lb. to 30lb. and upwards.

Live-baiting, or dead-bait fishing, with "gorge tackle," is

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never practised now by true anglers who fish in a sportsmanlike manner; a great objection is its cruelty, for the bait is *swallowed*, the pike is usually hooked in the stomach, and in its efforts to escape its intestines are either torn or dragged up, causing such extreme pain that the fish can

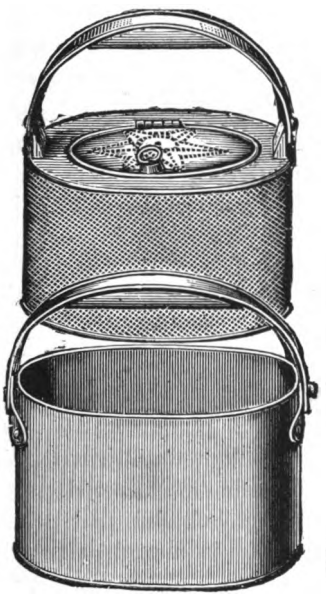

FIG. 36.

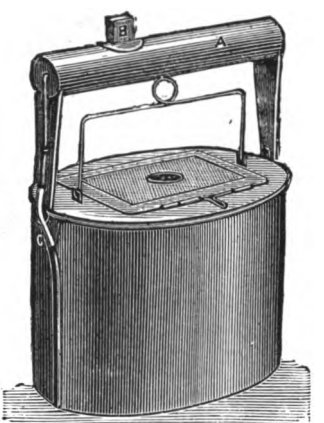

FIG. 37.—"Field's" Aërating Can.

give no sport, but is, in fact, hauled out "like a log," and small fish are so injured that, if returned to the water, they are sure to die. In "snap-fishing," as in "spinning" and "paternostering," the pike are hooked in the jaw, they suffer no pain, and give the best of sport, because they fight only against the restraint of their tether.

A bait-can will be required in which to carry the live baits

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to the riverside; and to keep them alive the water must be renewed occasionally. The best cans are those made with a perforated interior holder (Fig. 36), which can be lifted out and placed in the water. Another excellent one is "Field's Aërating Can" (Fig. 37), with perforated interior.

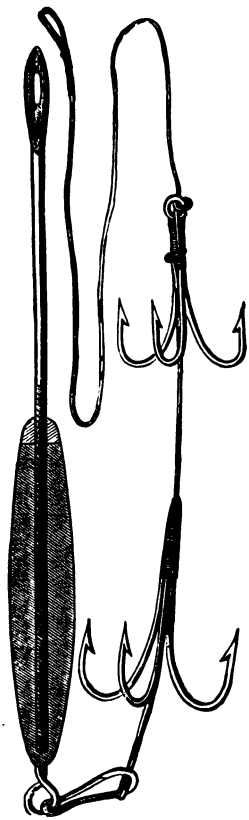

FIG. 38.—"Marston" Dead-bait Snap.

Another method is *dead-bait* snap-fishing, an excellent way for searching among sub-aqueous growths and between weeds—sure places to find pike in during the autumn. For this a special tackle has been invented by Mr. R. B. Marston, and which can be used in many other ways by the pike-angler (Fig. 38). In dead snap-fishing, take a few yards of line off the reel, and cast the bait near to weeds, or into them, if the growth is not too luxuriant. When the bait has sunk to the bottom, lift the rod point and let the bait sink again, then gently draw in a yard or two of line, and try another place, and thus proceed until the bait is close to the bank or boat. By these means search the weeds and water round about; then with a greater length of line make longer casts into every likely place to harbour a pike, and when one is found and seizes the lure, it will be known by a sudden stoppage and, may be, shaking of the bait, or the pike may swim off with it. This is called "a run." Then

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wind up the slack line, drive home the hooks with a firm steady *draw* of the rod rather than a sharp strike, and play the fish *on and off the winch*, in preference to having coils of line on the ground or in the boat. Get the pike away from the weeds to open water, and land him soon as is possible.

"Spinning" for pike is a branch of angling which nearer approaches the elegance of fly-fishing than any other mode. The same, or a similar, rod to that already described may be used, but with the long and more springy top. The same kind of reel will do, but the line may be finer than that used for "live-bait snap," and, of course, waterproofed. Sixty or eighty yards will be amply sufficient. The trace of stained stout salmon gut, about 5ft. in length, has a lead placed midway to sink the bait, and three swivels between the lead and end of the trace to assist the rotation of the spinning bait. The "Fishing Gazette" Lead, invented by Mr. R. B. Marston, can be taken off or put on to a trace without unfastening the trace or anything but the curved wire pin of the lead. To use it, unfasten the pin as you would the safety-pin of a brooch, pass the trace into the curved eye, then wind it into the curves of the pin and secure the latter in the catch—the lead cannot slip—the wire loop or eye should hang uppermost on the trace. This lead is made in large and small sizes (Fig. 39).

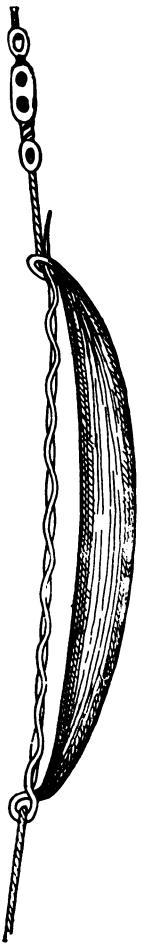

FIG. 39.—"Fishing Gazette" Lead

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Another good lead is the "Field," and a new one just placed on the market, in all the tackle-shops; it is known as the "Archer-Jardine" (Fig. 40); this lead is chased in spiral grooves, round which the line is wound; it can be instantly removed if necessary, and replaced at any distance nearer or farther from the bait; and, if straightened, can be used for "snap-fishing."

At the end of the trace must be a large loop or a buckle swivel, to which the "flight" of hooks is attached. There are several kinds of "flights"—the Thames is made thus (Fig. 41), a sliding lip-hook and three triangles, bound

FIG. 40.—"Archer-Jardine" Non-Slipping Leads.

on gimp at intervals of 1¼in. or 1½in., with a reversed single hook next the end triangle, to hold the tail of the bait at the correct bend to ensure a proper and brilliant "spin." The "Pennell" Flight (Fig. 42) is also an excellent tackle, and holds the bait very securely.

Another is the "Francis" spinning flight (Fig. 43), and in my opinion it is a better killing tackle than either of the other two; there are not so many hooks, but they are placed so as to hold the bait firmly in position, and secure a pike that seizes the lure. I was once fishing with the late Mr. F. Francis, when he "ran" thirteen fish, and landed a dozen of them.

To bait a spinning flight, lay the bait in the left hand; take the tail hook, or, if a triangle, one of them, and pass

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FIG. 41.—"Thames" Flight.

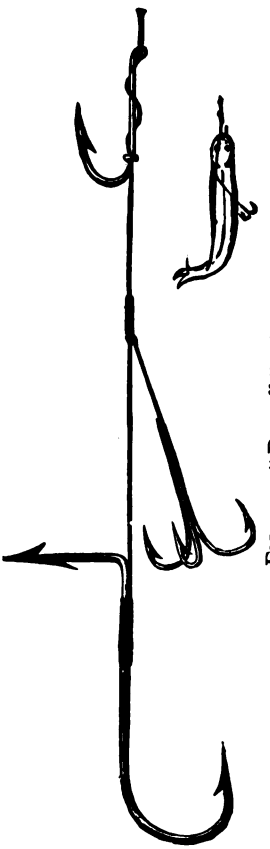

FIG. 42.—"Pennell" Flight.

SPINNING FLIGHTS (see also pp. 82 and 112).

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its point into the bait about ¾in. from the tail, press the point round through the fleshy part, and out again as near the base of the tail fin as is possible. This should curve the tail to nearly a right angle; place in the other hooks, or *one* of each triangle (if a Thames flight), keep the bait *straight*, adjust the position of lip-hook so as to suit the length of bait, which if properly done should spin correctly and brilliantly—it should not have a "wobbling" rotation in the water.

FIG. 43.—"Francis" Flight.

If the beginner finds it difficult to put a bait on a flight so that it spins properly, he can use a "Chapman" or an "Archer" Spinner (Fig. 44), either of which are excellent tackles.

Of artificial "spinning baits" there is a large variety, and possibly among the best are the "Bell's Life"; Jardine's india-rubber "Convolutes" (Fig. 45 and Fig. 46), which are made in all sizes, and "Reversible Fins"; the "Phantoms," "Serpentanic" (Fig. 48), and "Wagtail." Of metal baits, "Spoons" in all their varieties —"Clippers," "Cleopatras," and large "Devons"—account for the death of more pike, possibly, than other patterns; but for "snap" and "paternoster" fishing artificials are useless.

"Spinning" has its charms and advantages, for with no sloppy bait-can to carry, but a dozen or two selected baits

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FIG. 44.—"Archer" Spinner.

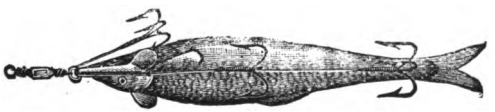

FIG. 45.—Ditto, "Baited.

FIG. 46.—"Jardine's" India-rubber Convolute.

FIG. 47.—"Jardine's" India-rubber Convolute.

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instead, packed in bran, tackle case and flask in pocket, gaff and fish bag in sling, well booted and warmly clad, nothing is more enjoyable than to walk along and "spin" all the likely places of a "piking" river, capturing fish here and there. The *modus operandi* of "casting the bait" is to grasp the rod some distance up the butt with the right hand, the knob at the end of the butt being placed against the right groin, with the left hand holding the line, of which some yards have been coiled on the ground or floor of punt. The best way is to carry it in small reversed (*i.e.*, figure-of-8)

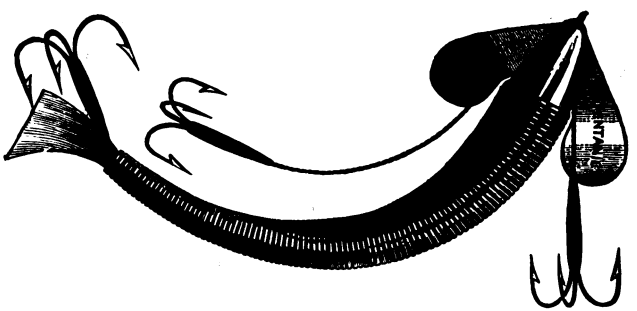

FIG. 48.—"Serpentanic" Bait.

coils in the palm, and with the right shoulder turned rather towards the place where it is desired to cast the bait; then with a gentle but accelerated swing of the rod release the line, and the bait should reach and drop into the place wished, with scarcely a splash. Practice will make perfect, and enable the angler to cover any reasonable distance required. The line must be drawn in at a moderate speed, and, if a very small sweep or motion of the rod-top is given between the "draws" or pulls, it adds to the attractiveness of the spin. The Trent style of casting off the reel and *winding* back again has this advantage: the line is not so likely to get entangled; but the bait, in my opinion, travels in too level

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and "jog-trot" a manner. It lacks the brilliancy of the Thames mode of spinning, by which a more natural motion is given, that in effect is more deadly, for it imparts a glitter and piquancy to the lure which a hungry *Esox lucius* can scarcely ever resist. The bait should not be lifted from the water until close up to the bank or boat, for a pike may have been following it to make a dash at it at last, when he appears to be likely to lose it.

Although "spinning" may be considered the most artistic method, yet I have usually found "paternostering" the most certain and successful way to fish for pike. A 12ft. or 13ft. cane rod, not too stiff, is necessary, with guard rings of half-inch diameter, and all the same size, to allow of any accidental tangle passing easily through them, without checking a fish that may be hooked; to the line attach by the usual double hitch, a 4ft. trace of salmon gut, stained olive or green, to assimilate in colour to the weeds, and to the trace add from 18in. to 24in. (according to the depth of water) of trout gut, with a ½oz. or ¾oz. lead plummet; for should there occur a "hitch up" to any obstruction, sufficient strain will break the weaker gut, and all that is lost is the plummet (Fig. 49). The bait, a dace 5in. long, should be hooked through its under jaw *first*, and the upper lip, for which reason the hook should be a square bend (Fig. 49), with a rather short shank, bound on to 12in. of stained gimp. Baits live longer when hooked through both jaw and lip than the *upper* lip only, but it *must be a square bend* to allow them to breathe; the gimp hook is placed on a loop at the junction of the salmon and trout gut. Draw off eight or ten yards of line from the reel, and, casting the bait out, fish all the nearest water first, gathering up line slowly with the fingers into the left hand in a kind of figure-of-eight (8) coil — a knack to be acquired by practice; then, slightly lifting and dropping the point of the

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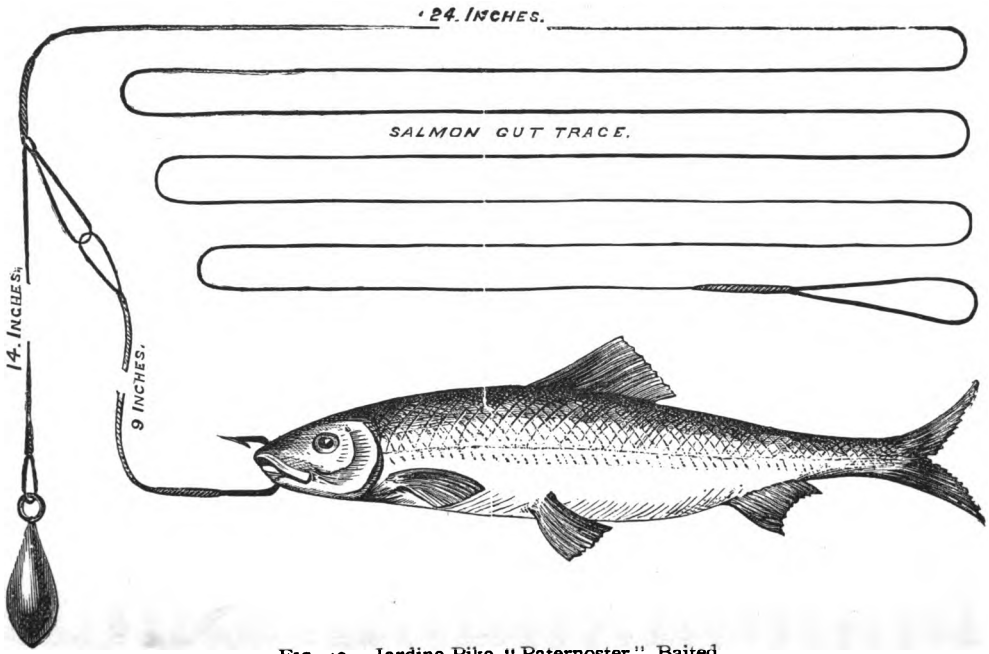

FIG. 49.—Jardine Pike "Paternoster" Baited.

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rod, but always keeping a moderately tight line, insinuate the bait into likely corners, eddies and between weeds. During this operation the bait "pirouettes" round about in a most tempting and attractive manner. After thus searching all the water near, lift out the bait, cast it to another place, and so proceed—throwing off the palm, that is, the loose line coiled in the hand—until a pike is found, which will be known by the bait being arrested, or, may be, shaken, and the fish moving off with it, when two or three yards of line should be paid out, three or four seconds allowed the fish to turn the bait head first into his mouth, and a firm draw given (rather than a strike) by smartly elevating the top of the rod, and the pike will be securely hooked. Don't forget to play your capture *on the reel*, instead of drawing coils on to the ground. If pike show a capricious mood, and carry the bait crossways in their mouth, as they sometimes do, not turning it, then place the hook through the back fin, or a small "snap tackle" may be advantageously used. The shorter hook of the top triangle put through the bait's lips, and the small No. 2 hook of the other, inserted in the base of the bait's back fin—by this method a pike can scarcely escape being hooked.

Another method of pike-fishing is "ledgering," and under certain conditions of weather, and thick water in flooded rivers, is often successful. The tackle consists of a gimp trace passed through a perforated 1¼oz. bullet (Fig. 50), which is an improvement on a spherical bullet. The trace is tied to the line, and has a swan-shot pinched on, 2½ft. or 3ft. above the bait (a small dace or roach), to prevent the bullet slipping too low down, and a single No. 10 square bend hook used, placed through both lips of the bait, or, if preferred, a "snap-tackle." The rod should be stiff—so use the short top, or a rod made purposely for ledgering.

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Select a day, if possible, when the river is clearing after a flood, and cast the baited ledger into deep quiet eddies, and between the streams at the tails of islands, or where two rivers meet, for in such places dace and roach congregate to rest themselves from the stress of the stream, and there pike go too, so as to be near their natural food. Keep a tight line, the bait will have four or five feet to "pirouette" in; quietly lift and drop the bait into other places, letting it remain a few minutes in each, until a pike appropriates it, when play him to the gaff or landing-net. You will know when you have a bite, for at such times pike are savagely hungry, and fight hard for their liberty; therefore, use strong tackle.

FIG. 50.—Improved Ledger Bullet.

Perch bite boldly, and one of the most successful and sporting ways to fish for them is "paternostering," for the dexterous angler can fish places where "floating" and "spinning" would result in failure. Perch are usually to be found near moss-grown piles, old flood-gates, and camp-sheathings, near submerged roots, steep banks, under and among weeds, also boughs overhanging water. Such places can be best fished with paternoster.

To make the tackle—get 4ft. or 5ft. of strong round trout gut; to the end loop a pear-shaped lead plummet of ½oz. weight or more, according to the depth of water and strength of stream. About 5in. above the plummet tie a loop in the gut, and at intervals of 12in. two other loops, to each of which the hooks are secured by a hitch knot (Fig. 51). The hooks (No. 6 or 7) should be whipped on to 6in. of gut, rather finer than the trace, so that if caught in any obstruction the hook-link will be the first to break. Small gudgeons, minnows, or worms are the usual baits; a gudgeon on the bottom, a worm in the middle, and

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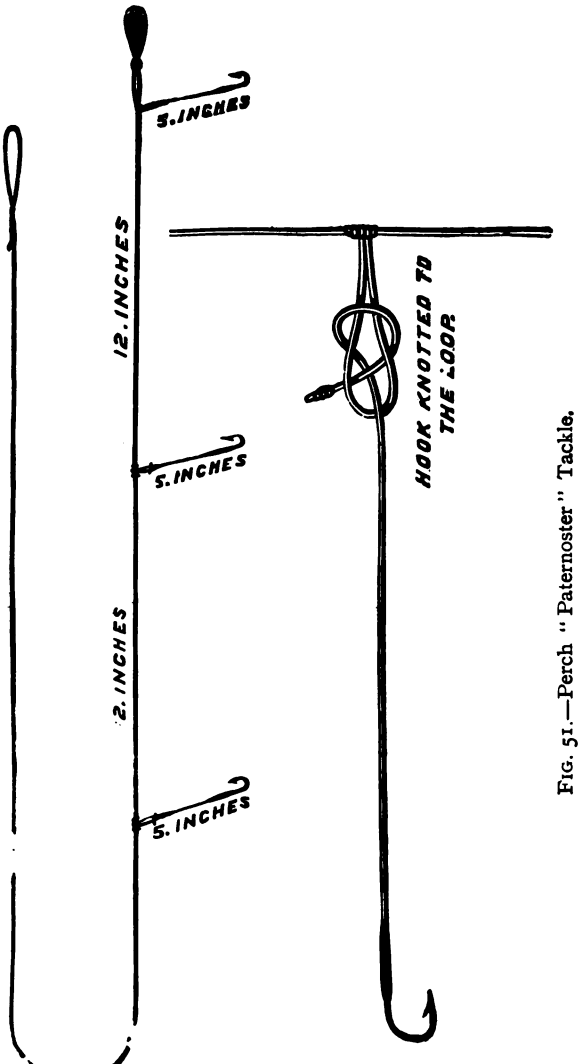

Perch Paternoster Tackle.

Method of Knotting Gut of Hook to Loop of Paternoster, &c.

FIG. 51.—Perch "Paternoster" Tackle.

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minnow on the top hook may be used; the minnows and gudgeons to be hooked through the side of their top lip only.

The reason the lowest hook is so near the plummet is, that the bait may be close to the ground, and it, as a rule, will catch most fish. See the minnows are lively, and the worms bright, well scoured, and tough—brandlings are excellent worm baits.

"Paternostering" for perch is much the same as for pike. Drop the baits in quietly, and fish every likely place; a bite will be known by a tug; do not strike immediately, but depress the rod point a little, and thus slacken the line; at the second or third pluck or tug the perch will have the bait inside his jaws; then strike firmly, but not heavily, for perch have tender mouths, their cheeks being little more than skin, and the hook might tear out.

As perch consort together in shoals during the autumn and winter, where one is caught others may be expected; but if two or three are hooked and escape, then the angler may look for no more sport in that place, and had better go and fish another "swim."

CHAPTER XII

SPINNING WITH THE MINNOW

THIS is one of the most attractive branches of the angler's art, and to me possesses peculiar attractions, for I have succeeded in capturing many kinds of fish with the minnow in nearly every part of England and Ireland, and have not found it ineffective on trying it once or twice in the sea. Premising that the general principles of spinning with the minnow are similar to those men-

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tioned in connection with spinning for pike; the minnow may be caught and preserved as described at the end of this chapter.

The tackle consists of a longer and somewhat lighter rod than that used for general trolling. Gimp may be dispensed with, and gut of varying fineness and strength substituted. The reel-line may be finer, and it need not be so long. The arrangements of the hooks consist of one large or body-hook, to slightly curve the minnow, and a flying trace, armed

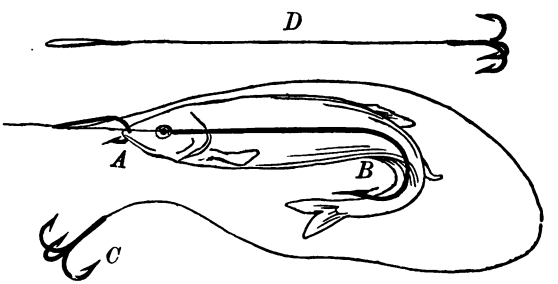

FIG. 52.

with one or more hooks, is appended. One of the simplest forms of hooks is one used largely in the North in spinning for trout, and is highly spoken of. *A* is the lip-hook, *B* the body-hook, and *C* the flying-trace, which may have a double hook intead of a triangle. The position of the fish, when baited, is shown by the fine outline. The barb of the hook is inserted in the mouth of the fish, and brought out just below the tail, as shown in Fig. 52. In fishing for trout I prefer the flying-trace, or drag, to be from two and a half to four inches behind the tail of the fish, as shown at *C* (Fig. 52); but in finer water, or when fishing for perch, I take off *C*, and put on the smaller loop, *D*. In bright water the lip-hoop may be made smaller, and the drag dispensed with altogether. Trout seize their prey by the tail, perch and

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pike by the middle—hence the variation in the tackle. The tackle should be whipped with white silk on strong gut, and a swivel should be placed some twenty inches above the bait, and a second one a yard farther up. Lead may be cast round the shank of the body-hook, or a few split shot added above the first swivel, to keep the bait well down, particularly in swollen waters, when it is most deadly. In clearer waters they may be dispensed with. In dark, gloomy days, in June

FIG. 53.

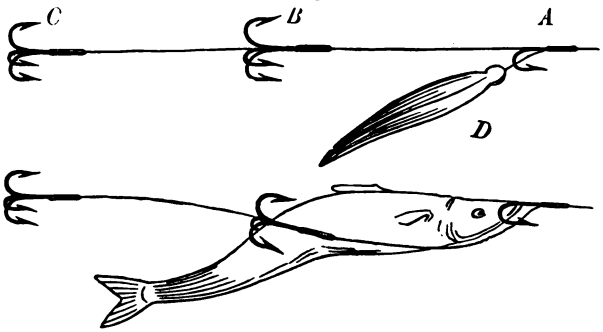

FIG. 54.

and July, and in warm summer nights, the minnow will be found a deadly bait for trout.

The essentials of a perfect minnow-tackle are thus correctly epitomised by Mr. Pennell, the modern author on spinning and trolling:

"1. As to hooks (*A*), an arrangement which will give a brilliant spin to the bait; (*B*), which will most certainly hook any fish that takes it; (*C*), and which will least often let him escape afterwards.

"2. A trace, *fine*, stong, and clear of all encumbrances.

"3. A lead so placed as to sink with the greatest rapidity, and least disturbance or show in the water.

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"4. The utmost simplicity of application in the whole tackle."

The foregoing (Fig. 53), represents Mr. Pennell's realisation of the essentials, which I can cordially endorse.

In it will be seen "that *A* represents the lip-hook, (whipped to the main link, and not movable); *B*, a fixed triangle, one hook of which is to be fastened through the back of the minnow; *C*, a flying triangle, hanging loose below its tail; *D*, a lead, or sinker, whipped on to the shank of the lip-hoop, and lying in the belly when baited." This excellent minnow tackle may be baited by pushing the lead well into the belly of the dead minnow; the lip-hoop is passed through both its lips, the upper one first; and, lastly, insert one hook of the triangle *B* through its back, just below the back fin, so as to bend the body to produce a brilliant spin. The diagram (Fig. 54) should be the position of the bait when properly baited.

This tackle combines all the requisites of minnow-spinning, and may be successfully used for perch. It can, of course, be made in all sizes. An excellent spinning-tackle for trout is also made by adding a loose fly-triangle, whipped on some twisted gut, to a 3½in. spinning-flight (as described in the previous chapter), over the reverse hook, as shown by the dotted line.

The bait, in minnow-spinning, is swung across the pool, as in trolling; and though there are various dogmas about fishing up and down stream, as in fly-fishing, the angler will do well to consult his own judgment, and be guided by the character of the water and surrounding circumstances. I had long in use a pet set of spinning-tackle; but I confess that it will not bear comparison with the one invented by the author of the "Angler Naturalist."

In the last chapter of this little book I have given a few hints on catching the minnow, in addition to those general

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directions when speaking of this pretty fish in Chapter VII. A good stock of minnows is highly necessary to an angler, and they should be small, silver-sided, and about an inch and a half to two inches long. The coarser and darker members of the family are of little use.

In the far North minnows are captured by the following ingenious contrivance:—A clean glass bottle * is obtained of the shape shown in Fig. 55. A fine-meshed net is tied over the mouth, *A*, and a few crumbs of bread are placed inside. It is then placed with its mouth to the current, in a stream frequented by minnows; the water agitates the crumbs; the little gentry assemble to see the fun, and quickly find

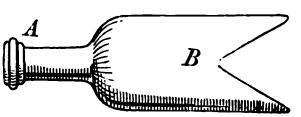

FIG. 55.

their way through the aperture *B* into the bottle, where they are joined by their companions by the dozen. This bottle is invaluable, though awkward to carry about. Minnows may be kept alive in a running stream in a wire-work box. They should be carried alive in a bait-can.

Salted minnows are the alternative if live ones are not to be had. They are chosen for this purpose a size larger than is necessary, as they shrivel up somewhat in the brine. They should be left in the salt some twelve hours, and then preserved in a glass bottle, well sealed. Or they may be preserved in spirits of wine, as recommended for dace and gudgeon. This plan has, however, the drawback of being expensive.

* Messrs. Alfred & Son, Moorgate Street, London, sell these glass minnow-traps.

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A most deadly way of spinning with a small natural minnow (which should have its fins and tail cut off), is to cast it as a fly is cast. Select a minnow about an inch in length, put it on the spinning-flight as described with Fig. 53, only of very small size.

No lead is used on the trace itself, as the small belly lead pushed down the minnow's mouth is sufficient. The lip-hook having been passed through both lips, the minnow is curved and the upper triangle fixed in the body so as to keep it curved to make it spin. The trace should be about four feet of fine stained gut with three small steel swivels. An old 10-foot fly-rod with the top joint shortened by some six or eight inches answers admirably for casting a minnow overhead in this way. The reel-line should be fine and the rings of the rod of the "Bridge" or snake pattern. Although the bait is cast overhead as a fly is cast, the line must be managed very differently; if the angler is fishing from a boat he pulls some line off the reel, and having drawn up the bait so that the top swivel is just under the top of the rod, he holds it (*i.e.* the rod, with bait hanging from it) straight out behind, then with a forward motion of the hand (not unlike the action in throwing a stone, but not with such force, of course), slow at first and then faster, the bait is brought sharply forward and the line released at the same instant, so that the slack line can run freely through the rings as it is pulled out by the impetus given to the bait by bringing the rod forward as described above. The rod should be kept pointed to the spot aimed at—or rather the spot it is seen the bait is travelling to, for not every spinner can cast his bait just where he wants it to go, and directly the minnow touches the water the line must be pulled in with the left hand, while the right gives a series of little pulls at the bait with the rod by alternately dropping and raising the point a little; this gives a more attractive movement to

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the bait than a mere dead straight and level spin. Having drawn the minnow on until the top swivel on the trace is again near the rod point, the bait is lifted out and the cast repeated as before. As regards where to cast, if you are fishing a river from a boat cast in as near to the bank as you can, also under bushes, trees, and behind rocks, in fact anywhere that your experience tells you trout are likely to be found.

If you are fishing from the bank or wading you cannot well let the slack line fall into the water, or among sticks and thistles, as it would be in a continual state of tangle, so in recovering your line you must either wind it in in a figure-of-eight shape over the thumb and fingers of your left hand, or gather it into a ball in your left hand, or carry a shallow basket strapped in front of you, and as you pull the line in with the left hand let it fall in coils into the basket. The winding in, on or in the hand, requires considerable skill and long practice, and the basket plan is much better because you can draw in line as fast as you please. To be successful in this style of fishing (first described many years ago in the *Fishing Gazette*, under the title of "Fly-Fishing, Spinning," by A. R. I. E. L.), your tackle must be as fine as possible—very tiny triangles and swivels, fine stained gut and a fine dressed plaited silk line. The Halcyon spinner and other small and light artificial baits can be thrown over-hand in this way. It requires a lot of practice, but is very deadly when properly done; it should, of course, only be used where spinning is permitted.

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FLY-FISHING

CHAPTER XIII

THROWING THE LINE AND FLIES—MAKING A CAST—HUMOURING THE FLIES—HOW TO FISH A STREAM—HOW TO STRIKE, HOOK, PLAY, AND LAND A FISH.

To become a good fly-fisher requires address, skill, nicety of touch, and, above all, practice. Experience alone can make the youthful angler proficient in the highest branch of the angler's art. He has to capture the swiftest of fish with the finest and frailest material, in the clearest streams. Other sports may be more exciting than artificial fly-fishing, but there are none which requires more adroitness, more intelligence, a quicker eye, or a lighter hand; while the brain must be quick to apprehend, the limbs active, and the eye watchful. You see the fly-fisher with his slender rod, gracefully waving his line over his head, and the flies drop into the stream with the lightness of a gossamer; the line does not even ripple the water. Anxiously the angler watches the artificial insects formed so cunningly to deceive the wary trout, which lies with his nose up-stream watching for his prey.

Ere the young angler can realise all the delights of his pursuit, he will have much to learn, and it will be his fault if he

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does not profit by these instructions. He must remember, however, that all that a book can do is to point out the right road, and practice must do the rest.

The first lesson which the novice has to learn is to throw the line. To do this properly requires no little address The rod should be light, stiffish rather than supple, and from ten to twelve feet long. His winch should be firmly secured to the butt, and he should draw out from three to four yards beyond the topmost ring. The rings must be in a right line with the winch, and the line should run easily through them. Some anglers fix the winch on with the handle facing the left hand, and on hooking a fish turn the rod over and wind up with the right, but the majority put the winch on with the handle facing the right hand, when no turning over is necessary. The winch and rings should be on the under-side of the rod; and for the first attempt, the line should not be much longer than the rod itself. The beginner may now make his first cast.

To do this easily and gracefully the rod must be grasped lightly by the right hand, just above the winch, where it will balance properly. The thumb should be straight along the upper part of the rod, and slightly bent, so that the fleshy part of the thumb alone presses on the butt. The upper end of the rod should point towards the left, and the right elbow should be kept close to the side, free from constraint, and the body in an easy posture. Take the end of the reel-line between the forefinger and thumb of the left hand. You are now supposed to be on the river's brink ready for your first cast. Take it easy. If you are flurried, you will fail By the motion of your right wrist and forearm, bring the rod round to the right, with the point slightly lowered; and as the line gets taut, let it go, point the end of the rod backward; let it describe an irregular horseshoe curve, and then cast it forward by a flinging motion of the wrist and forearm.

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The line will double back as the point of the rod is lowered, the end of the line will be carried forward, and fall lightly on the surface of the water. As the line goes forward, raise the elbow, and carry your arm forward to guide the line, but not so strong as to check the fly. In all probability, to the great chagrin of the young fisherman, splash will go the line into the water, and probably the end of the rod with it.

Our young Walton should not despair, but strive to avoid this drawback. He will best do so by keeping the body upright and the chest backward. Stand with your left foot a little forward, and flat on the ground, so as to afford a firm purchase, whilst the right foot should have the toes turned out, and the ball of the foot touching the ground with a firm springy pressure; and if you are holding your rod properly as you guide your line, you will find the butt of the rod touching the under-side of your forearm, and thereby preventing the end of the rod from falling too low. A little practice will enable the beginner to throw a short line with precision. He may then double the length of his cast, taking care to give the line plenty of time when behind. Nothing looks worse than casting with the arm fully extended, or is more likely to frighten the fish.

When eight or ten yards of the reel-line can be cast with ease and facility in any direction in such a manner so as not to allow more than three or four feet to fall lightly on the water, the angler may add the gut-collar or cast, made as already described, of about three yards of silkworm gut (page 20). This will give some ten yards of line to throw with, and the practice should be pursued until the line goes out pretty straight and falls lightly on the water. At first it will aid the beginner if he practises on that side of the river where he has a good breeze at his back. This will make his earlier efforts much easier, and enable him to drop the flies lightly and gently on the surface. When the angler can do

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this, and fish fine and far off, he may fish from left to right, or in the opposite direction to that above described. It is always well to practise various methods of casting, so as to avoid obstructions in or on the side of the river, and occasionally to cast underhand. The left hand may be practised likewise in casting, so as to relieve the right arm when tired, but it is by no means essential to success. Avoid the coachman's twist or jerk, or away will go your end-fly with a crack. Your motions should be easy, graceful and precise, not sudden, harsh and violent.

In places where it is necessary to make a long cast, after each cast a yard or two of line should be pulled in with the left hand and left to hang down, then the line being grasped between the rod and the hand the top is raised so as to pull the line up to the surface, and then it is picked off the water by a backward motion of the rod; then when you send the line forward again, just before it is fully extended you release the loose slack and that is carried out: this is called "shooting the line," and is invaluable in long casting or in casting with a heavy line, as it enables you to put a fly on the water almost as lightly as if it had fallen from a tree. The great secret of successful fly-casting is to know exactly when to make the forward cast, and that is when the whole of the line is extended behind, and just before it would, if allowed to do so, begin to fall to the ground.*

The *angler's eye* must next be acquired. The line must not only be thrown well, but with precision and accuracy. The best method of practice is to have a mark in the water, and endeavour to throw below it, above it, beyond it, on it, and on different sides of it, until you can do what you wish with tolerable precision. You should practise throwing the line where obstructions exist, until you can avoid

* See diagram of overhand casting in Chapter on Fly-Fishing for Salmon.

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their entanglements and difficulties. Watch the movements of an old angler under difficulties, and endeavour to imitate them. In the compass of this little manual, it is impossible to give more than general directions approved by practice, showing what errors to avoid, and what course to pursue.

I presume at this stage of proceeding the beginner is anxious to try his hand with a fly at the end of his casting-line. If he had one before, he would have lost it again and again. He may take a large single fly, tied at the end of a length of gut, and loop it to the end of his casting-line. This is the tail-fly, or stretcher, and with it you may practise until the rising of a fish shows you in the most pleasing manner that you are becoming proficient. Do not, however, be too anxious to emulate the old gentleman above you on the stream, who has a "cast" of three flies, which he manages so deftly. Wait till next season before you proceed beyond a single "dropper," as each additional fly is called. Your casting-line may be lengthened from two to three yards, which will be found a very convenient length for a single-handed rod.

The next thing to learn is how to make up a cast of flies. The ordinary way is by adding from one to four flies, called "bobs" or "droppers," to the casting-line, from twenty inches to two feet apart. The droppers should hang from two to three inches from the main line, and should be joined to it by slipping the knotted end of the "bob" through the links of the fisher's knot, described on page 20. This is a simple, easy and efficient mode of making a fly-cast, and especially suitable for beginners. The drawback is that occasionally you lose a fish by the knot of the dropper slipping through the two knots on the gut-cast. The droppers can be easily removed. It should not be forgotten that the flies must be dressed on the finest gut, and anything that will add to the strength of the line without adding to its dimensions, should

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not be overlooked. Mr. Stewart recommends a fly-cast somewhat different from the above, and much more difficult to make. He takes two flies on long lengths of fine gut, and ties the two ends of gut together; so as to have a fly at each end. He then whips a length of gut about two and a half inches above one of the flies, and to the end of the gut he attaches another length of gut on which a fly has been dressed, and so on until the required number have been added. He claims for this plan the recommendation that each fly really forms a continuation of the main line, and if it does not strengthen, it certainly does not weaken it. The old loop practice, once so common, should only be used where you want great strength and the fish are not likely to be scared at the loop. For salmon flies and large flies generally, the attachment by a loop on the gut-cast and one on the end of the gut of the dropper is by far the simplest and safest plan.

With two or three "casts" twisted round his felt wide-awake hat, the young fly-fisher is ready to commence operations. His dress must be sober-coloured. He has his rod, reel, fishing-basket or haversack, landing-net or gaff, and, on his feet, his waterproof boots or stockings. He has a knife in his pocket, a pair of tweezers, a disgorger, scissors, and his fly-book. Let us hope the sandwich case, flask, and cigar or pipe case is not forgotten—*i.e.* if he is old enough to indulge in these luxuries. Thus equipped for the day, he may sally forth on his piscatory campaign with pleasurable anticipation.

For all ordinary purposes a rod of some ten to twelve fee long will be sufficient for most waters. The long double handed rod will be found tiresome and unmanageable when fishing for trout. The novice should use a stiffish rod, and indeed some authorities recommend that no other should be used. Many of our best salmon and trout anglers prefer

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fly-rods with what is known as the "Castleconnell"* action; they have more weight in the upper part and play down to the hand more than ordinary fly-rods. To any one who has been accustomed to a rod with a stiff butt a "Castleconnell" feels topheavy, but once you have mastered the action you appreciate how greatly it assists you in casting; in fact, a good "Castleconnell" almost fishes by itself. Of the lines and casts we have already treated. Let us now proceed to the fish.

One of the first trout streams I ever fished presented greater variety of scenery and water in a shorter space than any other I have met with. While my eyes were feasting themselves on beauty, a learned discussion commenced as to whether the stream ought to be fished "up" or "down." Since that time a great deal of paper and ink have been wasted on the subject, but it is not yet decided authoritatively either way. Excellent authorities can be brought forward to prove that each plan is the correct thing. My experience goes to show that, whilst it is more difficult to fish up-stream and harder work, it is more scientific, and is likely to bring a greater weight of fish to the creel. Fish, which generally lie with their heads up-stream, are less likely to see the angler when he is going up than when he is going down, and they can be struck easier, and in their subsequent struggles they are less likely to disturb the unfished water than when fishing down-stream, as a trout generally rushes downward when he feels the hook. To fish down-stream is easier, is more common, and fair sport may be obtained. Perhaps, after all, it is best to avoid dogmatically adhering to either of these ideas. Fish upwards whenever you can, even at a little inconvenience, and come down on the opposite bank when the fish are likely to be hungry.

* Messrs. Enright & Son, Castleconnell, Ireland, have a great reputation for these rods.

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As you approach the stream do so cautiously, and keep out of sight as much as possible. Your gut-casts will be all the better if they have been slightly soaked in water before you commence, so as to have no harshness or awkward wavy coils on the gut. A good plan to straighten and also to test a gut-cast is to grasp it tightly in the left hand and then draw it slowly through from end to end, this tests every knot. The most skilful angler cannot make his flies fall too lightly, or keep too much out of sight. In some streams and pools it will be necessary to kneel on the bank. If the current is strong you may repeat the cast, and fish the river inch by inch, as it were, if the pool or stream looks promising; and the casts should be made partly up and partly across the stream, so that the flies spread across the stream. Watch your flies carefully the moment they alight on the surface of the water, for that is the moment considered the most deadly by all anglers, and when the fish is most likely to mistake them for the real insect, and to seize them. Strike at once, firmly but gently, before the fish can eject the fly on finding his mistake. Striking should be done by a slight but quick motion of the wrist, and in the same direction as the rod is moving at the time. An excellent plan to fish a stream is to keep away from the bank, and fish the nearer side first, keeping the flies on the surface, or but an inch or two below it, until the line gets dragged by the stream. Then return to the tail of the stream and fish the off-side in the same way. In very clear water this plan is essential to success. By all means the fly-fisher should endeavour to give his flies as natural an appearance as possible. Never drag your flies straight across the water, let them come down with the stream as nearly as possible as a natural fly does. Should they be under water, any motion communicated to them is worse than useless. If the trout hooked is a small one, out with

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him at once without disturbing the water. If a large one, pull it down-stream. By doing this you have the force of the current in your favour, the fish chokes rapidly, and soon exhausts itself. Playing a fish is the great crisis of angling. The struggle of force has commenced, and it is doubtful which will be the conqueror. If a large trout is well hooked he usually goes like lightning for his "holt," as it is called—that is, his home or the place where he retires to when not feeding, or when frightened by any one passing along the bank. As this "holt" is generally under weeds, roots of a willow or alder, or behind a bit of old camp-sheathing, the angler must use all his skill to prevent his reaching it. He must make the fish pull against the spring of the rod by keeping the point of the rod well up. To drop the point of the rod towards the fish, or (as many beginners generally do) allow him to pull it down so that it nearly touches the water, is fatal. Of course you must give line when a fish rushes away, but do not give an inch more than you are obliged to, and wind in again rapidly every chance you get: a smallish fish "hooked foul," *i.e.* not in the mouth, often fights so as to deceive you into thinking it a big one. In playing a good fish, if he rushes up or down stream, follow and keep abreast of him as much as possible; this is a most important rule, as you have far more control of him than when he is much higher up or lower down the stream than you are. At every pause turn the butt-end of your rod to him, bringing the lower joints over your right shoulder. The strain will then be equalised on your tackle. If still vigorous, do not press upon him too hard; let your rod come more to the perpendicular, and indulge him with another run or two. As he becomes weaker, wind him up so as to make him show himself. If his fins beat languidly, and he is evidently weak, guide him with the water, not against it, to some easy landing-place; and if the landing-net or gaff is not handy, take him

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in the left hand, but do not attempt to lift him out of the water by the line, or take the hook out of his mouth whilst in the water, if you should be wading, or you may lose your labour, your temper, and the fish at the same time.

As a general rule, a salmon or trout when well hooked fights deep down in the water, and one which is only lightly hooked plunges and flounders about near the surface and the fly comes away. There are often exceptions to this rule, and occasionally in plunging about the fish causes the hook to take a deeper hold. Anyway, as long as you feel he is on there is hope. A clever fly-fisher will often kill a big trout within a few seconds of hooking him while he is floundering on the surface as if bewildered, and the landing-net is cleverly slipped under him before he has realised the situation. This generally happens only when the fish has been hooked a yard or two up-stream above the angler and comes splashing down on the surface.

Remember, in playing a fish, that success depends quite as much on *suaviter in modo* as the *fortiter in re.* Lead him into the open water gently, and do not let him have an unlimited quantity of line, which, though it may tire the fish, gives one less command over him. As his vigour becomes reduced, and he turns on his side, keep his mouth open at the surface of the water, so as to suffocate him This apparent paradox is by no means difficult of accomplishment. Always play your fish with a light hand, and never seize your line in either hand either to shorten or lengthen it. It is an awkward, bad practice, and should be avoided. Of course, if your reel goes too stiffly you may have to pull line off, but then it ought *not* to go too stiffly.

Occasionally the hooked fish, prior to taking his deep dive, takes it into its head to perform some aërial evolutions, which are exceedingly trying to the angler's skill, as the line may be easily broken by a stroke of the tail. It is best to

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keep the line taut whilst the fish is rising, and slacken it considerably as the fish falls, so as to prevent the tail striking the taut line. In landing a fish, let the landing-net be slipped under the fish, so that he may drop into it. Bring him, if possible, to a shelving bank; but if this is not possible, bring the exhausted fish close under the bank, and slip the net under him. If you can get a trout or other fish's head just above the surface when he is nearly exhausted, you should keep it there, as he then comes easily to the net, whereas if you let him fight with his head under water he can see where he is going, and fights desperately. Do not frighten him, and let the net be kept of a dark colour. If you use the gaff, insert it beneath the gills whilst he is gasping, or strike it beneath one of the pectoral fins. A landing-net or a gaff is indispensable in fly-fishing.

CHAPTER XIV

FLY-FISHING—(*continued*)

TROUT: THEIR HAUNTS, HABITS, AND TASTES—SCOTCH AND IRISH FLY-FISHING—MONTHLY LIST OF FLIES—GENERAL HINTS ON GRAYLING AND TROUT FISHING.

WHILE the mere mechanical routine of the "gentle craft" is easily acquired by those who have the desire to do so, and who possess the necessary patience, there is much to be learned in order to become an expert and scientific angler. He must know the haunts of the fish, and tell almost at a glance where the best fish lie, and choose intuitively, as it were, the most alluring baits, and those best adapted to the season of the year, and the particular locality. Observation and experience must be the joint teachers of this special knowledge, for no verbal directions can impart it. There is also

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the fine feeling of a sportsman to be acquired, which checks mere butchery of the fish, leads the angler to fish fairly, and places the love of sport above the desire to kill a great lot of fish. The whole art of angling has been truly said to be the knowledge of how, when, and where to fish, and what to fish with.

The trout, which after all is the special object of the fly-fisher's ambition, is a gentlemanly fish, of high instincts. Not for him, if he can avoid it, are the slow sluggish stream or muddy waters. He likes not grovelling in the mud, but courses along the watery highway which runs clear over a gravelly bed. He is nice in his taste, and prefers the sportive fly to the lowly grub. He is not easily entrapped, he calls forth the highest skill of the angler, and often comes off the victor in the encounter. He is truly the fish of the spring and summer, and is in the primest condition when nature is decked in her gayest apparel. From September to March he disappears from the angler's calendar. He waits until the daisy shoots from the sod, and then he delights in the shallows and the rougher streams, running into deeper water and shady pools, where he sojourns during the heat of summer. In whirlpools and holes he delights. He loves the sharp current of a mill race, where he can retire behind a rock or a big stone. Sometimes he is to be found under bridges, old trees, or between two arches which divide the current, and though his size and condition vary in different countries, his main characteristics remain the same. If he finds a spot in a river which he likes he will remain there unless caught or driven away by some larger fish; he does not swim in shoals like roach, but keeps himself to himself, being both reserved and suspicious.

But what is the favourite food of the trout? On this subject anglers cannot agree. The taste of the fish varies.

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He is hungry or the reverse, and from the experience of to-day and to-morrow, various theories have been propounded and learned discussions inaugurated, which only serve to perplex the inexperienced and to amuse the expert angler. There are as many different sorts of flies recommended as there are days in the year. Nay, there are some who use one fly in the early morning, another in the forenoon, a third during the heat of the day, and a fourth in the evening. The young angler may indulge these fancies when he has plenty of time to spare, and has profited by the result of my experience and of those who have kindly advised me in this disputed portion of our work.

Those flies will be found to kill best which most nearly resemble in colour and shape the common flies of the streams on which you are fishing. Colour is most important, even a shade darker or lighter often making the difference between a heavy creel and an empty one.

An excellent plan is to arrange the "cast" so as, if possible, to embrace the varied taste of trout, or to meet their caprice. Mr. Stewart, for instance, recommends, "When commencing a day's fishing at any season, the angler should begin with three or four different varieties, say a black spider for the tail-fly, a woodcock wing with yellow silk and red hackle for the first dropper, a hare-lug body and corn-bunting wing for the second dropper, and a dun-coloured spider for the fourth fly." It will be easily seen which are the favourites, and then the others may be changed. The tail-fly and the fly next to it will generally be found to be the most deadly. Larger flies may be used in rivers not much fished, but in well-fished clear streams the flies must be small and neatly made.

So great is the difference of opinion amongst anglers of experience with respect to the number of flies necessary, that Mr. Fitzgibbon ("Ephemera") gives a reduced list of

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sixty-eight flies, while Mr. Ronald, in his "Fly-Fisher's Entomology," seems to have exhausted the insect creation in his endeavours to show *all* the flies a fly-fisher *may* use. On the other hand, Mr. Stewart ("Practical Angler") gives only six, which for curiosity we extract:

1. A woodcock wing, with a single turn of a red hackle, or landrail feather, dressed with yellow silk, freely exposed on the body. For fishing in dark-coloured waters this fly may be dressed with scarlet thread.

2. A hare-lug (ear) body with a corn-bunting or chaffinch wing. A woodcock wing may also be put on the same body, but should be made of the small light-coloured feather taken from the inside of the wing.

3. The same wing as the last fly, with a single turn of a soft black hen hackle, or a small feather taken from the shoulders of the starling, dressed with dark-coloured silk.

Thus for flies proper: now for the "spiders" or hackles.

1. The black spider. This is made of the small feather of the cock starling, dressed with brown silk, and is upon the whole the most killing imitation we know. This fly was shown to Mr. Stewart by the renowned James Baillie, and it is used constantly by those gentlemen.

2. The red spider should be made of the small feather taken from the outside of the wing of the landrail, dressed with yellow silk, and is deserving of a very high rank, particularly in coloured water.

3. The dun spider. This should be made of the small soft dun or ash-coloured feather taken from the outside of the wing of the dotterel. As this kind is scarce, a feather from the inside of the wing of the starling will have to serve as a substitute.

I can speak to the general efficiency of all these, but I cannot endorse the author's doctrine that they are sufficient.

The accompanying plate gives illustrations of sixteen

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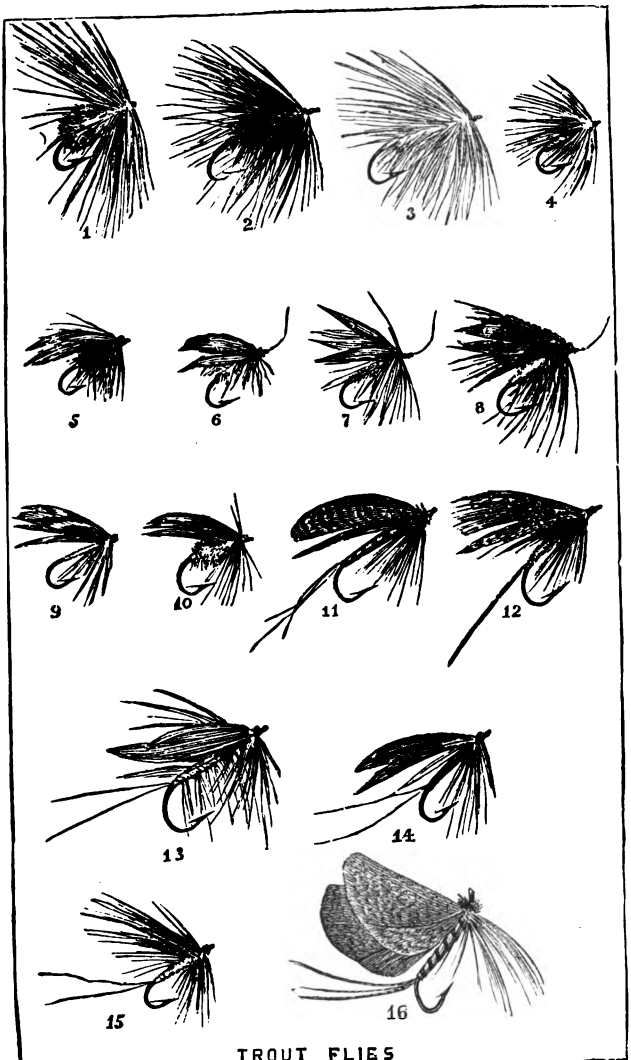

TROUT FLIES

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useful flies. Fig. 1 is a useful beetle; with a shorter hackle it is the coch-y-bondhu of Welsh fishermen. Figs. 2 and 3 are useful palmers, which, if dressed on larger hooks, form excellent chub-flies. Fig. 4 is the golden palmer. Fig. 5 is the house-fly, and if dressed with a golden harl becomes the bluebottle. Fig. 6 is the fern-fly. Figs. 7 and 8 fairly represent the shape of the sedges or moths, and Fig. 9 the duns. Fig. 10 is the governor, and the general form is that of the ant-flies. Fig. 11 is the stone-fly. Fig. 12 is the March-brown; Fig. 13 the blue dun; Fig. 14 the red spinner; Fig. 15, whirling-dun; Fig. 16 the May-fly.

There are several maxims which the young fisherman would do well to remember. Tread lightly, and keep yourself well out of sight. Always fish with as fine a tackle as you can use, and think no time wasted in care and preparation.

The best weather for fishing is probably when a warm south-west wind ripples the surface of the water; but the direction of the wind, with reference to the point of the compass, is of less consequence than its power. It is exceedingly difficult to fish up-stream when the wind is blowing down; but the splash of the falling line into the water (which it will do under these circumstances, in consequence of the force necessary to be used) is less likely to be noticed than in calm weather. When there is no breeze, wait until the motion of the line has subsided, and then draw the flies slowly towards you. Never allow the flies to remain stationary.* In sunny weather avoid letting your shadow fall into the stream. Rather have the sun in your eyes.

As a rule, the best time for fishing is in the forenoon, and later in the evening, when trout are on the "feed," which may be easily seen by their rising; make the most

* See Dry Fly-Fishing, p. 153.

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of your time, as quickly, quietly, and steadily as you can, or else you will mourn lost sport in a hitched, tangled, or broken line.

Do not be in a hurry to change your flies. If a fish rises and refuses your fly, give him a short rest and try him again. As long as he keeps on rising you have a good chance to kill him, especially if you can put over him a good imitation of what he is rising at.

However tempting it may be to wade, and however well prepared you may be, do not do so unnecessarily; it only disturbs the fish, spoils your neighbour's sport, and is not conducive to the health even of those who happen to have an iron constitution.

Trout will seldom rise immediately after a flood, as they have been too well fed. The water is best after sufficient rain to just colour it, or when clearing after a flood.

Fishing at night, or in dull weather, the flies should be larger than those used in clear weather during the day. In dull, wet weather, the flies take better when they sink beneath the surface of the water. A large sedge is best for night-fishing, and not more than one need be used. In the heat of summer the addition of a "gentle" to the fly will add much to its attractiveness, but this is bait-fishing and not in any way to be considered as artificial fly-fishing, and must never be used where "fly only" is allowed.

CHAPTER XV

ARTIFICIAL FLIES, AND HOW TO MAKE THEM

CHEAP as artificial flies may be bought, and experienced as the professional hands may be in their manufacture, every angler has felt the want of the special knowledge to make

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his own flies, or alter existing ones. If the angler practises when young, he soon acquires an expertness which he never forgets, and which will serve him in his need, and enable him to find an agreeable occupation on many a wet afternoon, when unable to pursue his favourite sport.

It is difficult to say anything that is new on this subject, or even to clothe the old practice with new expressions; but I will endeavour to describe the process clearly and concisely.

The necessary implements are few. A small table-vice will be an advantage. A small pair of brass hackle pliers, a pair of fine scissors, curved at the points, and a pair with very sharp and fine points, a stout needle (which may be fitted into a small handle), for dividing wings and picking out dubbing, will be required.

The *materials* used by the fly-dresser of the present day are somewhat more simple than was formerly thought possible—shape being more attended to and variety of material less. Feathers of various kinds are not only more suitable, but last longer, than almost any other substance that has been employed for the purpose, and they are supplemented with furs and silk. In selecting feathers, great care is necessary, and they should in general be plucked from birds when in full plumage, and every description of bird may be laid under contribution for this purpose. Hackles taken from the neck of the common cock are very useful when of a proper colour and shape, and the fibres should appear to taper gradually from the root towards the point, but should, in fact, be even in length throughout. The dun or blue hackle is particularly difficult to obtain of the right colour with the fibres of the proper length, which is short of half an inch. Starling-wing feathers are in universal estimation, as combining good colour with that medium strength which avoids harshness on the one hand, and soft-

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ness on the other. Feathers of the landrail are also highly esteemed, both the quill feathers and those taken from outside the wing, being of a reddish-brown colour; dotterel feathers are also useful, but apt to get soft in the water, and grey-plover, golden-plover, blackbird, thrush, partridge, pheasant, grouse, woodcock, snipe, and jay are commonly used. Even a tomtit's tail does not escape, while peacock and ostrich herls, or single fibres of their plumes when dyed, are in common use for bright and variously coloured flies, and stripped of their flue make excellent bodies. The wings of flies are made from the wing-feathers of the corn-bunting, lark, starling, chaffinch, woodcock, landrail, and other birds.

Fur and hair are used for the bodies of flies, under the name of "dubbing." These are wanted of every shade, and are usually obtained at the furrier's. A hare's ear, the fur of the water-rat, the fur of the mole, the fox, the squirrel and field-mouse, are also in request. Hog's down is the best hair, and should be obtained about Christmas. It may be dyed any colour. Mohair is sometimes used, also coloured worsted, floss silks and tinsels, and peacock's and ostrich herls.

For tying the flies, fine marking silk of different colours is necessary, some hard shoemaker's or saddler's wax, some colourless wax, of which we give the recipe, a variety of hooks, with a little gold and silver twist, and the fly-dresser has all the materials for making flies of many patterns.

Before commencing to make your flies, arrange all your materials in the handiest possible way under your eye. Let your gut be of the finest description, the hooks adapted to the size of the fly, with the wings, hackles, dubbing, and silk assorted. The flies are generally divided into two varieties—hackles, variously called "palmers" or "spiders;"

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winged flies, dressed with dubbing, or with hackles, in imitation of gnats, midges, and other flies; while "spiders" represent some insect struggling below the surface. At times trout feed for hours on the imperfect flies rising through the water and will not look at the perfect insect floating on the surface, although they often appear to be rising at the latter. It is when this is the case that such a fly as the celebrated Devonshire "Blue Upright," fished an inch or two under the surface, proves so deadly. This fly, when properly dressed, will kill in any wet-fly trout stream—a soft flabby dun hen's hackle put on sparingly at the shoulders of the fly, a smooth plain dark-brown quill body and two soft whisks of a dark colour. The fly should have the hackle put on so as to leave room to put several turns of the tying silk at the shoulder between the hackle and the end of the shank tapering off at the point. This gives the fly a bulky appearance about the shoulders, and imitates the shape of the fly in its case rising through the water. The trout will often take this fly when there is scarcely a vestige of hackle left. The tying-silk should be waxed with dark wax.

The first process, that of fastening the gut to the hook, is thus performed. The gut is first straightened,* and the end flattened and softened between the teeth, so as to make it broad and prevent it slipping. The hook is then taken in the left hand between the forefinger and thumb, or fixed in the vice, with the back uppermost, and the barbed point downwards, so as to leave the shank bare. The silk is whipped two or three times round the shank and its own waste end, so as to get a purchase. The gut is then laid along under the shank. The gut and hook are then whipped firmly and neatly together, in close regular screw-like twists,

* To straighten a length of gut or a gut casting line hold it tightly in the left hand and draw it slowly through with the right. This is also the best way to test a gut cast.

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until you come to the end of the shank, where a few turns of the thread will form the head, and a slip-noose fastens the silk. If well and neatly done, it will present the appearance of Fig. 56. This is the foundation of all flies dressed on strands of gut. Flies on eyed hooks, now so generally used, will be referred to in the chapter on "Dry Fly-Fishing."

To make the palmer-hackle, or spider, great care is necessary, but the operation is not a difficult though a critical

FIG. 56. FIG. 57.

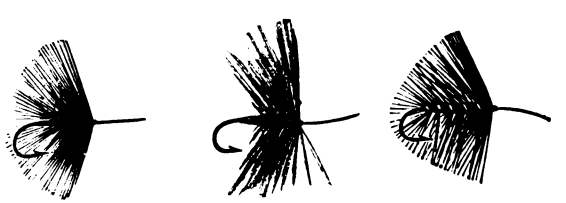

FIG. 58. FIG. 59. FIG. 60.

one. Still holding the hook as before, you take the feather, lay it on the hook face downwards, with the root towards the bend of the hook, wrap the thread two or three times round it and the hook, and then cut off the root end. Fig. 57 will show the hook at this stage. There are two processes of forming the spider open to the student. He may wind the feather neatly round the hook, until he reaches the bend of the hook, where he may fasten off,

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and release any fibres that may have become entangled during the winding. He may then clip away any long rough points, the end of the feather, and the silk, and his fly will represent Fig. 58. Another process is to run the thread, after tying the hackle on (as Fig. 57), along the centre of the feather, and with the forefinger and thumb of the right hand twist them together until the feather is rolled round the thread, and in this state wrap it round the hook, taking care that the fibres stick out well to represent the legs of the insect, until you come to the bend of the hook, when it may be fastened off with the whip-fastening, or a succession of hitch-knots. The feathers must be long enough to hide the hook, as shown in Fig. 59. This is Stewart's method, and is only suitable for soft hackles.

To make a palmer-hackle, representing a luscious caterpillar (Fig. 60), the latter process cannot be followed. When the hackle-feather is fastened on (Fig. 57), some floss-silk, peacock or ostrich-tail, or dubbing is used, twisted round your waxed thread, and wrapped round the shank of the hook to form the body; but beware of getting it too bulky. Fasten at the head, then wind the hackle, as first described, and fasten at the tail. If ribbed with either gold or silver twist, it must be attached to the shank of the hook with the hackle, and wound over the dubbing and body before the hackle is brought down. The ends must be cut away and the silk fastened. It is better not to cut the hackle-feathers, but they must be neatly released with the needle, so as to approach the regularity of the engraving, Fig. 58. Occasionally, hackles are fastened at the bend, and wrapped towards the end of the shank, or reversely to the plan above described; and this plan is adopted when wings have to be added on small hooks. The hackle, in this case, will have to be tied first by the tip, and not by the root.

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The great difficulty in dressing a winged fly is to put the wings on neatly. It is thus done. The hook is fastened to the gut as in Fig. 56; but the whipping is not continued to the end of the shank, it stops some three or four turns off, and the feathers are added which are to form the wings. These wings are generally composed of a few fibres of some appropriate feather, taken from the wing of some small bird, those lying on the inside of the wing being generally the longest, lightest, and most esteemed.* To whip these fibres on neatly, and make them lie properly, is a difficult

FIG. 61.

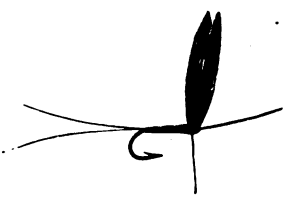

FIG. 62.

operation. You take these feathers firmly between the forefinger and thumb of the right hand, and lay them on the bare shank of the hook with the roots towards the bend, as shown in Fig. 61. The thread must be whipped three or four times firmly round the butt-ends of the fibres, as shown above, and the remainder of the butt ends cut off. It is necessary now to divide the wings, by passing the silk between them, and crossing it as you bring it up, bend the fibres back and form the head. The fly may now be finished in two or three ways, principally dependent on

* In imitating the May-fly, the March-brown and other cock-winged flies, care must be taken to select feathers from the right and left wings of the bird to make the right and left wings of the fly, otherwise they will not balance each other properly, and the fly will be lop-sided. The strips of feather should be as nearly as possible a match in colour and size.

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whether it is to be dressed with hackle or dubbing, or to have a detached body. If with dubbing, a little is twisted on to the waxed thread until it is rolled completely round it. It is then wrapped round the hook, so as to form the body of the fly, and the thread fastened off as in Fig. 62. A few hairs of the dubbing must be picked out round the head to give it the feathery appearance represented.

If dressed with a hackle, the wing should remain as in Fig. 61, and the root-end of the hackle be attached, and the silk wound to the bend, thence back to the shoulder, and the end of the thread should be fastened off with a slip-knot. The wing fibres must then be taken between the forefinger and thumb of the left hand reversed, and bent down over the back of the fly. This done, pass the thread in front of the wings, and twist it two or three times close and tight over the base of the wings. The fibres must be divided exactly in the middle with the dubbing needle. Pass the thread between them, and wind it round the bottom of one of the wings, crossing it as you bring it round under the other. Now whip the silk in front of the wings, form the head, wind the hackle behind the wings, and fasten; touch all knots with a little varnish, and you have an excellent fly complete, as in Fig. 62, without the tail, which appendage, however, may be added before the body is formed or the wings reversed. It is formed of two hairs or fibres, which can be tied in when the gut is put on to the hook, or immediately after the wings are attached. If necessary to wind gold or silver twist round the body of the fly, first tie on the tail, and then the gold twist, spin on the dubbing, wind it up to the wings carefully, fasten with a slip-knot and leave the end of the thread hanging. Take the gold twist and wind it with regular intervals up to the wings, fasten it,

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and cut away the loose twist. The hackle may then be wound for a couple of turns over twist and dubbing. Then fasten down, cutting away the loose end. The thread may then be brought through the wings, and the fly finished as before.

A good fly should have both wings equal; it should be well-proportioned, and should sit easily on the water. If the body of the fly is to be of silk, you may make it with the silk you fasten the hook to the gut with, only it must be waxed with colourless wax and must, of course, be of the colour you wish the body to be; tie on the hackle and wings, bring the hackle down two or three turns over the body (Fig. 63), fasten off, reverse the wings, tie them neatly, and always varnish the knot. If the wings are tied on last, they often sit better, though they may not last so long as those tied in the manner above described. If the beginner fails at first, he, by perseverance, will find his difficulties disappear. Let him copy good models as he progresses, and he will find our directions sufficiently explicit to enable him to make a very useful fly.

Artificial caddis for bottom-fishing is thus made: wings full, and a brownish-red hue, which should slant over a yellow floss-silk body, covered with goldbeater's skin, and ribbed with brown silk; a lap or two of bronze peacock herl will finish the head. On warm windy days it will be found very attractive.

Many dressers prefer to dispense with a vice, but it is a great aid to good sound work.

Mr. Cholmondeley Pennell thus refers to the Fly Vice illustrated: "Mr. James Ogden's 'Improved Fly Vice,' which very thoroughly and satisfactorily fulfils the necessary conditions; the first being that it should really hold the hook *so that it will not move when manipulating the fly.* This vice will hold, and hold fast too, any hook from

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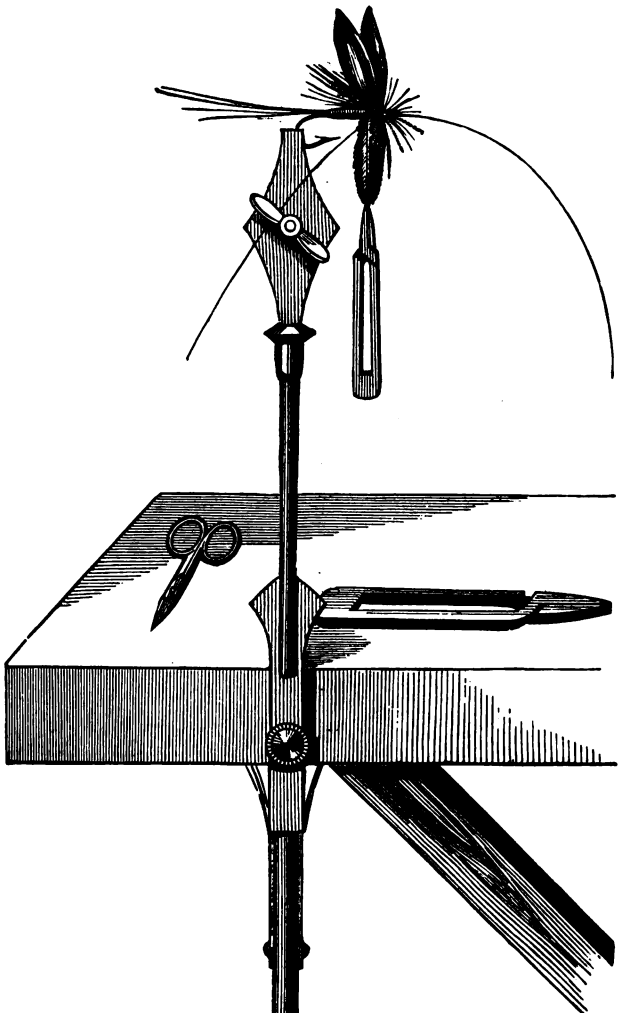

FIG. 63.—Ogden's Improved Fly Vice.

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No. ooo to a salmon hook. Another great advantage it possesses is that the vice holding the hook can in one half-second be almost instantaneously raised or depressed a complete foot at pleasure; or, equally instantaneously, ***turned round*** and fixed again so as to bring the fly into the desired position. Lastly, it is thoroughly strong, mechanically simple in operation, and will effectually clamp on to any table not more than 2½in. in thickness."

It is sold by Mr. James Ogden, of 28 Winchcomb Street, Cheltenham, whose little work on "Fly Making" will be found very useful. For dressing dry flies the standard authority is Mr. Frederic M. Halford's "Floating Flies, and How to Dress Them"; and for salmon flies, Captain Hale's "Salmon Flies, and How to Tie Them."

Now with respect to the colour of flies. A wide range of material fails to give the fly-maker every tint he requires, so that he is obliged to have recourse to the dyer's art.

With respect to the dyeing of materials for fly-making, thanks to Mr. Frederic M. Halford, a reliable set of dyes sold at a moderate price can be obtained of Messrs. E. Crawshaw & Co., 80 Fann Street, Aldersgate Street, London. In order, however, that the ambitious fly-fisher should have every convenience at command, I give a few tried recipes for making the dyes themselves.

The *green drake dye*.—To make the famous May-fly well is the acme of the fly-dresser's art, and one of the great difficulties is the proper colour for the wings, which are generally formed of the dappled feathers from the mallard's breast, dyed yellow green, which is somewhat difficult to imitate. Mr. Blacker's method is as follows:—"Boil two or three handfuls of yellow wood one hour in a quart of soft water; wash the mallard hackles in soap and hot water, then boil them a short time with a large spoonful of alum and cream of tartar in a little pipkin with a pint of

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water, take them out and immerse them in your yellow decoction, and simmer them slowly for an hour or two. The shorter the simmering the paler the yellow of the feathers; take them out and wash them in clean hard water." When there is occasion for dyeing *yellow green*, add a little blue, more or less according to the shade of green you wish to give to the yellow. If Crawshaw's dyes are used, the feathers must be washed and prepared to receive the colour as above, and a green can be mixed easily to the exact tint. Mr. Ronald, the great authority on flies, gives, however, another method. He makes a mordant by dissolving about a quarter of an ounce of alum in a pint of water, and then directs you to slightly boil the feathers in it to get the grease out of them, after which to boil them in an infusion of fustic to procure a yellow, and then subdue the brightness of the yellow by a little copperas.

Dun feathers.—Feathers may be dyed any shade of dun and yellowish dun by this means, which is the foundation of all good dyes. The feathers are placed in a saucepan with a quantity of soft water, and when thoroughly wetted, a small quantity of copperas (sulphate of copper) is added, and the whole simmered gently for a few minutes. This gives the mordant a base. The liquor is then removed, and the feathers are covered with a small quantity of soft water, and when simmering a small quantity of powdered Aleppo galls is added. Of course the tint will depend on the quantity of each material used, for by increasing the quantities the colour changes to almost every tint of dun. Logwood, madder, walnut peels, alder-tree, bark, and other astringent dye-woods may be used instead of galls, always using *soft* water, and obtaining the light colour before the dark. The fixing liquid is made from copperas, sulphate of alum, acetate of alum, or acetate of copper; if they are then well washed and simmered in a strong decoction of

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woad or weld (*Reseda luteola*), dyer's weed as it is commonly called, they will acquire a brilliant yellow colour. White feathers may be dyed dun, by first simmering them in alum water until thoroughly soaked, and then boiling them in water with fustic, sumach, and a small quantity of copperas.

To stain feathers an olive dun, &c.—Make a very strong infusion of the outside brown coating of an onion, by allowing the whole to infuse by the fire for twelve hours. If dun feathers are boiled in this dye, they will become an olive dun, and white feathers a yellow. If a small piece of copperas be added, the latter colour will become a useful muddy yellow, darker or lighter as may be required, and approaching to a yellow-olive dun, according to the quantity of copperas used.

To dye feathers various shades of red, amber, and brown.—First, boil them in alum mordant, already mentioned; secondly, boil them in an infusion of fustic strong enough to bring them to a bright yellow (about a tablespoonful to a pint of water); then boil them in a dye of madder, peach wood, or Brazil wood. To set the colour put a few drops of *dyer's* spirits (*i.e.* nitrate of tin combined with a small quantity of salt), which may be had from a silk-dyer, into the last-mentioned dye.

To turn red hackles brown.—Put a piece of copperas, the size of half a walnut, into a pint of water; boil it, and whilst boiling put in the red feathers. Let them remain in it until, by frequent examination, they are found to have taken the proper colour.

To dye feathers dark red and purple.—Hackles of various colours, boiled (without alum) in an infusion of logwood and Brazil wood-dust until they are as red as they can be made by this means, may be changed to a deeper red by putting them into a mixture of muriatic acid and tin, and to

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a purple by a warm solution of potash. As the muriatic acid is not to be saturated with tin, the solution must be made diluted. If it burns your tongue much, it will burn the feathers a little.

CHAPTER XVI

ARTIFICIAL FLIES AND THEIR VARIETIES*

In the preceding chapter I have given some simple directions for fly-making. I will now describe the material of which they are made, and their general names, which, however, vary in different localities. There is not a fly mentioned but what has been tested by experience to be useful for trout and grayling throughout the United Kingdom. I am not an advocate for a large assortment of flies. If the angler knows the district and the waters he intends fishing, half a dozen varieties, adapted to the season and the circumstances, will prove as a rule sufficient. In giving the following list I have selected those adapted to various localities.

In the earlier months of fly-fishing, say from February to the end of April, the first ten will be found good and effective :—

1. *The February Red.*—Body dark red squirrel's fur, equally mixed with claret-coloured mohair, but the latter predominating at the tail of the fly. Let it be spun with brown silk, and the wings from the softest quill feather of the peahen's wing which approaches the tint, which is that of a cake of glue held between the eye and the sun. Legs, a hackle stained of a claret colour. Hook, Nos. 1 and 2.

* The sizes of hooks are those of the New Scale, in which the small hooks begin with the small numbers. In the Old Scales, No. 15 or 16 was smallest, and No. 1 largest. See illustration of hooks in Appendix.

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2. *The Blue Dun.*—This fly remains on the angler's list until October. The body of hare's ear or water-rat's fur ribbed with yellow silk, a dun hen's hackle for the legs. The wings, a feather from a starling's wing, with two strands of a grizzled cock's hackle for tail. Hook, No. 10 (Fig. 13).

3. *Hofland's Fancy.*—This is a good general fly. Body, reddish dark brown floss silk. Legs, red hackle at shoulder. Wings, woodcock's quill. Tail, two or three strands of a red hackle. Hook, No. 1.

4. *Furnace Fly.*—This useful fly derives its name from the furnace hackle, which is not often met with. The outside fibres are a beautiful dark red, while that portion of them next the stem is black. They are obtained from the neck of a cock. This fly is made with an orange-coloured silk body, with a fieldfare's feather for wings, and a furnace hackle for the legs. Hook, Nos. 1 or 2.

5. *The March Brown.*—This is a showy fly, and bears many names, as the dun-drake, cob-fly, brown-caughlan, and turkey-fly (Fig. 12). It is a nearly universal favourite. It may be thus made of three sizes, on Nos. 2, 3, or 4 hooks. Body, deep straw-coloured silk wound over with reddish-brown fox hair. The wings should stand erect, made of the light fibres of a hen pheasant's wing; a honey dun hackle may be used for the legs, and two fibres of the wing may be used for the tail. When more than one fly is used at the same time, the tail-fly should be ribbed with gold twist, and the colour may be slightly varied.

6. *A March Brown*, as it is called, is also made with water-rat's fur, ribbed with yellow silk, partridge hackle for legs. Wings, tail feather of the partridge, and the tail two fibres of the same. Hook, Nos. 2, 3, or 4.

7. *The Red Spinner* is a fine showy fly, dressed thus: Body, red brown, silk ribbon with gold wire and tied on with brown silk; wings, starling's wing feather; legs, bright amber-red hackle; tail, two fibres of the same feather. Hook, Nos. 0 or 1.

8. *Carshalton Cock-tail.*—A dun fly, and will be found a good killer in many streams as well as its native Wandle. Body, light blue fur; legs, dark dun hackle; wings, the inside feather of a teal's wings; tail, two fibres of a white cock's hackle. Hook, Nos. 0 or 1.

9. *The Pale Yellow Dun.*—Excellent from April to the end of the season. Body, yellow mohair, or marten's pale yellow fur, tied with yellow silk; wings, the lightest part of a feather from a young starling's wing. Hook, Nos. 00, 0, or 1.

10. *The Soldier Palmer.*—Body, bronze-coloured peacock harl, ribbed with fine gold twist, and two black-red or furnace hackles, struck with strict regularity from the tail to the shoulder. Hook,

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Nos. 0 or 1. A general fly and special favourite with grayling (Fig. 40).

11. *Coch-y-bondhu.*—Body short and full, of black ostrich and brilliant peacock harl twisted together; wings and legs, a dark furnace cock's hackle of the purest black and red colour. Hook, Nos. 0, 1, or 2. This is a famous fly, says Ephemera; if fish will not rise at it, one may conclude they are not "on the feed." They either take it for a small red and black caterpillar, or for a round black and red beetle. Fine, warm, cloudy days are the best for its successful use. Its shape is shown in Fig. 1, but the hackles are too long. It kills best in rough, rapid water.

12. *The Orange Dun.*—Another fly in request on the Test and other southern streams. Body, red squirrel's fur, ribbed with gold thread; legs, red hackle; wings, from the starling's wing; tail, two fibres of red cock's hackle. Hook, Nos. 1 or 2.

13. *Cow-dung Fly* is in season throughout the year, and is used chiefly in dark, windy weather. Body, dull lemon-coloured mohair; legs, red hackle; wings, from feathers of the landrail, or starling's wing (Fig. 9). Hook, Nos. 1 or 2.

14. *Stone Fly.*—Wings, a mottled feather of the hen pheasant, or the dark-grey feather of a mallard, rather inclining to red, to be dressed large, long, and flat; body, yellow-brown mohair, mixed with light hare's-ear fur, and ribbed with yellow silk, so distributed in making the body of the fly that the under and hinder parts may exhibit most yellow to the fish; legs, a brown-red hackle; tail, two fibres of the brown mallard (Fig. 11). Hook, Nos. 4, 5, or 6.

15. *The Oak Fly or Down-looker.*—During the last fortnight in April the fly-fisher should never angle without this fly. It is called by some the ash-fly, cannon-fly, and woodcock-fly. It is found on the trunks of trees by the river-side in a state of quietude, its wings lying close to its back, and its head looking downwards; hence one of its names. In May and June this fly is also in season, and it will kill well in deep streams and on pools that are ruffled by a strong but tepid wind. I shall give but one way of dressing it, as follows: Body, yellow mohair, ribbed regularly with dark-brown silk; legs, a honey-dun hackle, wound thrice under the wings, which are to lie flat and short, and be made of the wing feather of a young partridge or hen pheasant. To be tipped with pale gold twist. Hook, Nos. 2, 3, or 4.

16. *The Sand Fly.*—Equally good for trout or grayling, from April to the end of September. The fur from a hare's neck, twisted round silk of the same colour; legs, a ginger-hen's hackle; wings, the feather from the landrail's wing. Hook, No. 1.

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17. *The Alder Fly.*—Body, any dark claret-coloured fur, as that which a brindled cow yields, and that of a copperish hue, from a dark-brindled pig or a brown-red spaniel's ear; upper wings, red fibres of the landrail's wing, or red tail feather of the partridge, lower wings of the starling's wing feather; legs, dark-red hackle; horns and tail of fibres, the colour of the legs, the horns or *antennæ* to be shorter than the body of the fly, but the tail a little longer. Hook, Nos. 1 to 4 (Fig. 8). Or the body may be made of peacock's harl dyed in Crawshaw's Magenta.

18. *The Hare's-ear Dun.*—A killing fly, and in great favour in Hampshire. Body, the fur of the hare's ear; wings, the feather from a starling's wing; tail, two fibres of the brown feather from a starling's wing. Hook, Nos. oo, o, or 1.

19. *The Blue Blow.*—Wings, from the tail feather of a tomtit; body, a blue water-rat's or monkey's fur; legs, a fine light-blue hackle; tail whisks, two blue hairs. Hook, Nos. oo or o.

20. *Gravel, or Spider Fly.*—Appears towards the latter end of April; where it is met with it may be fished with all day, and the trout take it freely. Water-rat's fur; legs, black hackle; wings, the feather from a partridge. Hook, No. 1. It may also be made with a dark dun hackle, which I prefer instead of the partridge feather.

21. *Black Gnat.*—A capital fly for dace as well as trout, and may be used from April to the end of the season. Body, ostrich harl, tied with black silk; legs black hackle or none; wings, the feather from a starling's wing. Hook, No. oo (Fig. 42).

22. *Red Ant.*—This is the small red ant, and there is another of the same size called the black ant, and two others named the large black and red ants. Body, peacock's harl, made full at the tail and spare towards the head; legs, red or ginger cock's hackle; wings, from the light feather of the starling's wing (Fig. 10). Hook No. 1.

23. *The Bracken-Clock* is a kind of beetle. If made upon a large hook, it will be found an excellent fly for the lakes in Scotland. Body, peacock's harl, made full at the tail and spare towards the head; legs, red or ginger cock's hackle; wings, landrail or pea-hen's wing. Hook, No. 1.

24. *Brown Palmer-Hackle.*—Body, brown floss silk, or brown fur, or mohair of a deep amber, or a rich brown ostrich harl, ribbed alternately with gold and silver twist; legs, a red cock's hackle. Hook, Nos. 3, 4, or 5.

25. *Red Palmer-Hackle.*—Body, dark-red-coloured mohair, with a little richly tinted red fur intermixed, to be ribbed with gold or silver twist; legs, a blood-red cock's hackle. Hook, Nos. 2, 3, or 4 (Fig. 3).

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26. *Golden Palmer-Hackle.*—Body, green and gold peacock's harl, ribbed with gold twist; a bright-red cock's hackle, worked with a rich green silk Hook, Nos. 2 to 5 (Fig. 4).

27. *Peacock Palmer-Hackle.*—Body, a rich full fibre of peacock harl, ribbed with wide silver platting. Make a head to this palmer with a bit of scarlet mohair. Legs, a dark grizzled hackle, dressed with red silk. Hook, Nos. 2, 3, or 4. This hackle, dressed very large, will kill Thames trout and chub.

28. *A Good General Palmer.*—Body, long and tapering of yellow mohair; legs, a good furnace hackle, wound on from tail to shoulder; head, black ostrich harl. Hook, Nos. 2 to 5 (Fig. 40).

29. *The Whirling Dun.*—Body, water-rat's fur, ribbed with yellow silk; wings, cock starling's wing feather; legs, blue-dun hackle; tail, two fibres of a grizzled hackle. Hook, Nos. 0, 1, or 2 (Fig. 15).

30. *Dotterel Hackle.*—Body, yellow tying silk, with a very little blue rabbit's fur spun on it, so as to show the yellow of the silk; wings and legs, dotterel hackle round the shoulder. Hook, Nos. 0 or 1, sneck bend.

31. *Golden Plover-Hackle.*—Body, yellowish-green floss silk; wings and legs, golden plover back feathers. Hook, Nos. 0, 1, or 2.

32. *Green Drake.*—Appears late in May or early in June. This short-lived insect is not to be found on every stream. Body, yellow floss silk, ribbed with brown silk; the extreme head and tail coppery-peacock's harl; legs, a red or ginger hackle; wings, the mottled wing of a mallard stained olive; tail or whisk, three hairs from a rabbit's whiskers. Hook, Nos. 2, 3, or 4.

33. *Gray Drake.*—Body, white floss silk, ribbed with dark brown or mulberry silk; head and top of the tail, a peacock's harl; legs, a grizzled cock's hackle; wings, from a mallard's mottled feather made to stand upright; tail, three whiskers of a rabbit. Hook, Nos. 2, 3, or 4.

34. *The Royal Charlie.*—Body, light buff-coloured fur; wings, the yellow feather under the thrush's wing to stand erect; legs, a very small yellow-dun hackle; tail, two fibres of the same. Hook, No. 1.

35. *Moths.*—White: body, white floss silk; white wings and legs, and black head. Brown: wings, light brown mallard; legs, a twine or two of red hackle, with a fibre or two for the tail; body, brown silk, twisted tightly with gold wire. Green moth: brown mottled wings, with a twist of brown hackle for wings; body, light brown, finished with bright green silk; no tail. Hooks, Nos. 1 or 2. The general shape is shown by Fig. 9.

36. *Fern Fly.*—This is an admirable May and summer fly. The body is to be made of deep brilliant-coloured orange silk, whipped

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sparingly with fine gold wire; wings, lying rather flat, to be made of the light mottled fibres of a young partridge's wing feathers; legs, a turn or two of a small fiery-red hackle. Hook, Nos. oo, o, or 1 (Fig. 6).

37. *The Wasp Fly* is dressed thus: Body, light-orange mohair, dubbed in very thin ribs, and alternated with black ostrich harl neatly and finely. Form the head of bronze harl; legs, two turns of a light-brown red hackle. Hook, Nos. 1, 2, or 3; and make the wings of a partridge hackle or mottled mallard's feather.

38. *The Governor.*—Body, bronze-coloured peacock's harl, tipped with red silk; legs, black; red hackle; wings, from the starling or partridge tail feathers. Hook, Nos. 1, 2, or 3 (Fig. 10).

39. *House Fly.*—Body, black ostrich harl, dressed rather full; wings, a lark's wing feather to be flat and extended; legs, a dark dun hackle. Hook, Nos. 1 or 2. In autumn, on windy days, this fly is often greedily taken by trout and grayling. It is a better fly for chub and dace (Fig. 5).

This list of flies is by no means complete, and since it was compiled (chiefly from Ronald and Fitzgibbon) many new flies and variations on the dressings of old ones have come into use. Perhaps the best advice that can be given to a young fly-fisher who is going to fish in any particular district is to write to the leading fishing-tackle maker in that district and obtain the killing flies for the time of year when he intends to fish. The best London fishing-tackle makers can also be relied on for this purpose. If he can afford it the fly-fisher should obtain the following standard works: "A Book of Angling," by Francis Francis; Ronald's "Fly-Fisher's Entomology;" "Floating Flies, and How to Dress Them," by F. M. Halford; "How to Tie Salmon Flies," by Captain Hale; "North British Flies," by Theakstone, edited by F. M. Walbran; and the volume on "Salmon and Trout Fishing" in the Badminton Library.

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NORTH-COUNTRY FLIES

[I am indebted to my friend, Mr. Francis M. Walbran, of Leeds, for this very useful account of some of the best North-country flies.—R. B. M.]

Some thirty years ago, during my angling apprenticeship, it was very seldom that I ever put a winged fly upon my cast, for I was taught by the old veterans who frequented the Yare and Skell that they were not to be compared with the hackle or spider flies which are usually called by the name at the head of this article. I am not in favour of a very large selection of flies, as the angler is apt to become puzzled which to pin his faith on. Theakstone gives the dressings of some ninety varieties, Wade over one hundred, and other north-country writers in like proportion; but I consider twenty patterns ample from March to October, and will therefore pick out only those which I have found the best in actual practice, giving the dressings of them and a few rema ks as to the best time for using them.

1. *Woodcock and Orange.*—Body, orange silk well waxed, hackled with the rich brown feather outside of a woodcock's wing. Hook, No. 1, Kendal scale. This is an imitation of the Early or Winter Brown, and appears on the water almost first of any fly. Mr. Henry Bradshaw, a noted Yorkshire angler, some years ago devised an excellent dressing for this fly, which I give next.

2. *Early Brown* (Bradshaw's Pattern).—Body, bronze peacock's harl, hackled with the *inside* feather of a woodcock's wing. Hook, No. 2, Kendal scale. This is beyond doubt one of the very best flies that can be used on any river during February and March—in fact, I prefer it to the ubiquitous March Brown.

3. *Water-hen Bloa.*—Body, yellow silk, dubbed with water-rat's fur, hackled with feather from under a water-hen's wing. Hook, No. 1, Kendal scale. A hackled pattern of the early blue dun, and a good fly to use on any river in the kingdom. It can be varied by ribbing with gold wire, when it becomes a hackled edition of Greenwell's Glory; it also kills well at times if dressed with a yellow-dyed quill body.

4. *Snipe Bloa.*—Body, yellow silk well waxed; hackled with the light bloa feather from under the Jack-snipe's wing; these must be

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carefully selected, those with white tips being unsuitable. Hook, Nos. o or 1, Kendal scale. A general favourite with Yorkshire anglers throughout the whole season; also may be dressed with a yellow-dyed quill body.

5. *Orange Partridge.*—Body, orange silk; hackled with the ruddy brown feather from a partridge's back. Hook, No. 1, Kendal scale. Another fly that is used all the season; answers best as a point fly. It imitates a variety of browns found on the streams throughout the year.

6. *Yellow Partridge* (*Dark*).—Same as above, but with lemon-coloured silk body. On the Eden, Coquet, and some of the Welsh rivers, a little dubbing of the same colour as the body is inserted under the hackle and a small gold tip added.

7. *Blue Partridge.*—Body, pale blue silk dubbed with blue fur or dyed wool; hackle same as in the two preceding patterns. Hook, No. 1, Kendal scale. An excellent imitation of the gravel-bed or sand-gnat, which is found more or less on every river where long gravel and shingle-beds abound. It is a splendid killer in April and May.

8. *Crimson Partridge.*—Body, crimson silk well waxed; hackle as above Hook, No. 1, Kendal scale. This fly is also termed "Royal Charlie," and is a great killer on some streams, especially small wooded brooks, such as the Laver at Ripon.

9. *Dark Snipe and Purple.*—Body, dark purple silk; hackled with feather from outside of a snipe's wing. Hook, No. 1, Kendal scale. A good killer in cold, dull weather.

10. *Dark Watchet.*—Body, orange and purple silk, twisted together and dubbed with water-rat's fur; hackled with feather from a blue hawk's wing; head, orange silk. Hook, No. oo, Kendal scale. The hackled imitation of the iron-blue dun; a good killer on cold days in April and May.

11. *Yellow Dotterel.*—Body, yellow silk; hackled with feather from under a dotterel's wing. Hook, Nos. o or 1, Kendal scale. An excellent hackled imitation of the numerous pale duns so prevalent in May and June. Dotterel feathers being so very scarce, the feather with golden tips from under a starling's wing may be substituted.

12. *Brown Owl.*—Body, orange silk; hackled with feather from outside of a brown owl's wing. Hook, No. 1, Kendal scale. A splendid evening fly during June, July, and August, taken equally well by both trout and grayling.

13. *Fog Black.*—Body, dark purple silk, dubbed with heron's harl; legs, from a starling's neck; wings, from a bullfinch's wing. Hook,

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No. o, Kendal scale. This fly is bred in the short grass called "fog" in Yorkshire, hence its name. It is an excellent grayling fly. Note—that *only* bullfinch's feather will do, having the gradual shading from black to almost white at the tips.

14. *Yellow-legged Bloa.*—Body, yellow silk; legs, olive hackle; tail, three whisps of the same; wings, palest starling. Hook, No. o, Kendal scale. An excellent killer in May and June, especially in warm, showery weather.

15. *The Knotted Midge* (Bradshaw's Pattern).—Body, purple silk and a little bronze peacock's harl, hackled with the sheeny metallic-looking feather from a jackdaw's neck. Hook, No. oo, short shank, Kendal scale. A splendid midge fly during June and July, especially in a clearing water.

16. *The Stone Midge.*—Body, heron's harl, tied with ash-grey silk; head, magpie's harl; hackled with feather from a pewit's neck. Hook, No. oo, short shank, Kendal scale.

17. *Dark Needle.*—Body, orange silk; head, peacock's harl; hackled with feather from brown owl's wing. Hook, No. o, Kendal scale. A capital fly, both in spring and autumn, for either trout or grayling.

18. *Poult Bloa.*—Body, yellow silk; hackled with feather from under a *young* grouse's wing. Hook, No. o, Kendal scale. May be varied by a ribbing of fine gold wire, when it may be termed a hackled edition of Flight's Fancy, or with a dubbing of red fur from a fox's ear to give it a rusty shade; there are only about half a dozen suitable feathers in each wing. A great favourite on the Wharfe in August, September, and October.

19. *Orange Grouse.*—Body, orange silk; hackled with the brown freckled feather from a grouse. Hook, No 1, Kendal scale. A grand fly for use in a brown water in August, when it is probably taken for the August Brown.

20. *Cinnamon Fly.*—Body, yellow silk, dubbed with water-rat's fur; hackled with feather from a red owl's wing, or from a thrush. Hook, No. 1, Kendal scale. I prefer the thrush's feather myself, and remember one September afternoon, on the Wharfe between Pool and Arthington, killing eighteen trout and grayling with that dressing.

These twenty patterns comprise the very best varieties of north-country flies, and many of them, especially the spring and autumn patterns, are as deadly for grayling as for trout. Twenty or thirty years ago most of the Yorkshire fishermen

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employed single horsehair on which to dress flies and make casts from, but since then really good sound, strong, transparent hair has become almost unprocurable. I have therefore, in common with many others, discarded it and now use the finest drawn gut, and tapered drawn gut casts. With the above twenty patterns in his fly-book an angler need never be at a loss in England, Scotland, Ireland, or Wales.*

DRY FLY-FISHING

By R. B. Marston

What do you mean by dry fly-fishing? This question is one which the beginner, naturally enough, asks his fly-fishing friends, who, if they belong exclusively to the dry-fly fraternity, will probably reply that it is the most scientific of all forms of fly-fishing—in fact, that it is as easily first as the rest are nowhere. They will also probably describe it as an extremely difficult art to learn.

It is both unfair and incorrect to describe this particular branch of the art as more scientific or more difficult than any other, and no fly-fisher, however young or old, need be deterred from learning, and to a certain extent mastering, this very fascinating style of fishing.

In reply to the question, what is dry fly-fishing? it may be said briefly to be, making your artificial trout, or grayling, or chub, or dace fly, *float on the surface of the water over a fish which is rising at the natural flies or insects which are being carried down on the surface of the water.* It will at once occur to the uninitiated that if you cast an artificial fly made of feathers, silks, tinsel, and a steel hook on to the water, it will get wet and sink. Not long ago Dr. Prime,

* A very favourite fly with many anglers is "Greenwell's Glory," which is thus dressed: Wings, blackbird, tied in a bunch and split; hackle, coch-y-bondhu; body, yellow tying silk (waxed with cobbler's wax till it has a greenish yellow tinge), ribbed over with fine *gold* wire. Mr. E. M. Tod kindly gives me this dressing.—Ed.

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the author of that delightful book of gossip about angling, entitled, "I Go a-Fishing," said, in an American journal, that to keep a fly dry so that it would float and not sink was an impossibility, which statement only proved that the doctor's knowledge of fly-fishing was limited to the old and excellent style now called wet fly-fishing. As a matter of fact it is perfectly easy to fish throughout the wettest day with your fly always floating on the surface, and that, too, in a gale of wind which makes the river like a small sea of waves. All that is needed is a fly made with the wings standing out from the body like those of a butterfly, and with rather more hackle than is needed in wet fly-fishing. The wings instead of lying close to the body stand out in a V-shape. Even this is not absolutely necessary, but the V-shape assists greatly in making the fly sit up naturally on the water, as they act like a parachute, making the hook fall underneath.*

Dry fly-fishing was first practised about twenty or five-and-twenty years ago, and chiefly on the clear slow trout and grayling streams of Hampshire, and the South of England generally. It was not, however, until that keen and accomplished angler, Mr. H. S. Hall, invented a special hook for dry fly-work that this style of fishing came into general use. After numberless experiments in which he was assisted by another very good angler, Mr. George L. Bankart, he succeeded in proving that the best form of hook for this work is one with a small metal eye at the end of the shank, to which the gut is attached by a knot. Hooks with metal eyes were made, of course, ages ago, but they were not in general use for fly-fishing until Mr. Hall made them known in the pages of the *Field* and the *Fishing Gazette*. Now almost every fishing-tackle maker keeps a stock of flies

* The fly in Fig. 63, page 140, gives an excellent idea of the proper shape and position of the wings in a fly for dry fly-fishing.

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on eyed hooks as well as attached to gut in the old style by whipping the gut to the shank before the fly is made.

One of the chief drawbacks in the early days of dry fly-fishing was that the fly whipped on to a strand of gut would stand very little of the kind of casting necessary. It is necessary, in order to make the fly float, to dry it in the air between each cast by making several sharp false casts in the air, and if this is done with flies fastened on fine gut in the old way it frequently happens that the fly is flicked off. You can tell when this has happened by hearing the sharp crack of the gut like the crack of a whip. But Mr. Hall discovered that with flies dressed on eyed hooks and properly knotted to it (as will be described and illustrated presently), this cracking off was reduced to an extraordinary extent, and it was this great advantage which did so much to overcome the prejudices at first entertained against flies dressed on eyed hooks. It was soon found, however, that flies on the new hooks had other great advantages over those whipped to strands of gut—viz., that there was no fear of their becoming valueless through the gut perishing; that if the link next the fly became cracked or frayed you could change it for a new piece; and that you could carry scores of flies in a box in your waistcoat pocket. Since Mr. Hall first made eyed-flies popular every other part of the dry-fly fisherman's outfit has been improved, and now we have special rods, special lines, numberless eyed fly-boxes, and other devices. Not that special rods or lines are *necessary*, and the angler who has a good old-fashioned fly-rod and line with some eyed flies can begin dry fly-fishing when he pleases.

Perhaps next to Mr. Hall's discovery of the eyed hook the greatest aid the dry-fly angler has received was through the publication, a few years ago, in the *Fishing Gazette*, of the "Great Oil Tip." Up to this time the difficulty was to

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keep your fly floating on the surface, especially on a wet day. Anglers owe this really great but simple boon to the late Mr. Thomas Andrews, of Guildford. Mr. Andrews' celebrity as a pisciculturist was world-wide; he was also a keen angler, and in one of his contributions to the *Gazette* he described how the application of a small quantity of paraffin oil to the fly caused it to float and not become sodden and sink, as is sooner or later the case with unoiled flies. Colonel Hawker, of Longparish, on the Test, gave Mr. Andrews the "tip," and very soon after he made it public its use became general. There are still some anglers who pretend to prefer an unoiled fly, for some unknown reason or other; but life is too short and opportunities of finding rising fish too few, for most of us to afford to discard the little bottle with a teaspoonful of paraffin oil in it, and a small camel's-hair brush stuck in the bottom of the cork so that when you pull out the cork there is a drop of oil on the brush, and all you have to do is to dab it on to the wings and hackle, just one touch is enough. Some anglers oil the hackle only and not the wings. Let the beginner try both plans, and he will soon find which is best.

The best way to carry the oil bottle is hanging from a string inside your creel. The difference between a fly oiled and one not oiled is this—the latter requires a far greater amount of drying between each cast, increasing the strain on the wrist quite three times what is required with the oiled fly, no slight matter, for dry fly-fishing is infinitely more trying to the wrist and arm than wet fly-fishing. Again, on a wet day, when the trout are pretty sure to rise well if there is any fly on, your unoiled fly soon becomes so soaked that no amount of thrashing in the air will make it float, and nothing is more tantalising than to see your fly gradually disappear a foot before it reaches the spot where the trout you are casting for is rising steadily. And if it does sink

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in this way do not hope that he may take it under water—rather expect to see that ominous wave which denotes that he is a good fish and that you have effectually sent him home with a "flea in his ear" instead of a fly in his mouth. But if you have your little bottle of oil with you (Messrs. Farlow & Co. keep a special bottle for the purpose always in stock ready for use), you can fish your fly dry all day long through any amount of rain.

A word of caution is necessary here to prevent the disappointment which some anglers trying the "oil tip" for the first time have experienced. They find that perhaps for the *first cast or two* the fly does not float well; this is simply because the excess of oil has not been carried away by the water. If you watch where your fly falls you will see a little patch of oil spreading out from the fly; at the second cast there is less of this, and very soon the fly begins to float splendidly. You want to make a false cast or two in the air to shake out the water and cause the wings and hackle to stand out nicely, but nothing like the drying is necessary as in the case of an unoiled fly.

Some anglers use vaseline instead of paraffin; certainly the latter is also useful to put on the reel-line to make it float—indeed, some anglers prefer it for this purpose to deer's fat.

It would be impossible in a small work on general angling like this to go thoroughly into the subject of dry fly-fishing. Any one who wishes to do that should buy or borrow the standard works on the art, viz.: "Floating Flies, and How to Dress Them," and "Dry Fly-Fishing in Theory and Practice,"* both by one of the most accomplished enthusiasts among English anglers, Mr. Frederic M. Halford. The beginner will also find many a useful hint in "A Handy Guide to Dry Fly-Fishing," by Cotswold Isis, M.A.*

* London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co., Ltd., St. Dunstan's House, Fetter Lane.

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That salmon, trout, grayling and other members of the great salmon family, migratory and non-migratory, as well as some less valuable fish, such as chub, dace, &c., love to "rise at a fly," is, and for centuries has been, a fact of the utmost importance to countless numbers of human beings, more particularly those speaking English. Once to have mastered the first rudiments of fly-fishing sufficiently to enable you to kill a brace or two of fish with the fly may not seem much to an outsider, but it means to the individual who has accomplished it that he has entered on what will be for the whole of his future life one of the phases of it of which he will never tire, of which he will never to his dying day learn too much. It is, of course, not in the mere killing of fish that this charm lies; that is merely the central attraction around which a thousand infinitely varied and ever-varying charms revolve.

Happy, then, is that boy who, as Walton says, is born with a love of angling. And without in the least contradicting Walton, that a man must be a born angler, it is certainly true that a man may have lived half or two-thirds of his life with never a brace of trout to his credit, and *then* become an enthusiast. It was in him, born in him, but the talent lay dormant until some happy circumstance, not accident, for these things are not accidents, called it forth.

The author of this book died before dry fly-fishing was known, or at any rate generally practised, and the editor of it is looking forward to meeting in a few weeks' time on the banks of the Itchen an angler who was probably born before Mr. Burgess, and who knew little or nothing of dry fly-fishing before his sixtieth birthday, and who since that birthday has for another twenty years been one of the keenest of salmon and dry-fly trout anglers living. It is never too late to mend, or to learn angling.

Suppose, then, that the reader wishes to try his hand at

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dry fly-fishing for the first time, and that some kind friend has invited him to have a day on the Itchen or Test or Kennet or Darenth, or other stream when the May-fly is up. He has a good fly-rod, a reel holding forty yards of tapered, dressed, plaited silk line, a collar of gut also tapered, of three yards length, and a box of artificial May-flies on eyed hooks. If he is in doubt as to what pattern of May-fly to use, then let him write to Mrs. Ogden Smith, of St. John's Hill, Clapham Junction, for some "Gladstone" May-flies, light and dark, say a dozen of each kind. Some day in the first week in June finds him at the side of the river putting his rod together, and as he does so he sees the May-flies rising from the water, fluttering a moment in the air, only to settle gently on the surface of the river and float down with the stream. The fly is so large there can be no mistaking it, nor can there be any mistake about the rise of the trout as the fly disappears. Here, then, he can see on a large scale the whole of the reason for dry fly-fishing. The May-fly floats on the surface exactly as do the various duns, gnats, and midges, only when he uses them as lures he must use infinitely smaller hooks and much finer gut; still the dry-fly lesson can be learned as well, or better, with the May-fly than with the small fly.

The rod having been put together, the next thing is to fix on the winch with the handle on the right-hand side of the rod, holding the latter in front of you by the butt, then draw out the line over the bar on the underside of the winch—*i.e.* in the space between the first and second bar, it has a freer run than if you took it over the angle caused by the first bar. Run it through the rings carefully so that you miss none, and if on arriving at the end ring on the top joint you find it is continued, as is often the case, in a straight line with the joint, carefully bend it down a little so that the line may run freely through it as it does through the other rings

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(which should be of the "snake" or "bridge" rigid patterns). A little attention to apparently trivial details like these will make all the difference in comfort in fishing. Having drawn some yards of reel-line beyond the end of your rod, if you have not already done so, fat your reel-line with deer-fat. The best way to do this is to draw off twenty yards or so and fasten them between two trees or posts, then, yard by yard, run the line between a bit of wash-leather in which is a small piece of deer's fat or a little vaseline. This not only makes your line run freely through the rings, but also makes it float on the surface of the water and so prevents it in a great measure from sinking and causing the fly to "drag." The line being "fatted," you now attach your three-yard tapered gut-cast; and the best way to do this is to have a foot of fairly stout gut whipped on to the end of your reel-line and fasten your cast to that by the common water-knot (see p. 20). It is neater and better than having a knot at the end of your casting-line and a loop in the gut-cast, as this knot, as you will soon find, is a thing in which the hook of the fly very often gets caught. After a day's fishing, if you want to remove the gut-cast, you simply cut it at the knot in the first link of the gut next the reel-line. This plan also saves your tapered end of the reel-line very greatly.

Having fastened on your gut-cast, straighten and test it by drawing it through the left hand closed tightly on it, this will straighten the links and at the same time test each knot—it is better to break the cast at a weak knot yourself and secure it by a strong one than to let a good trout break it for you. Many anglers carry their gut-casts in a damping-box—*i.e.* a thin circular tin box with a bit of damp spongiopiline on which the casts are placed. But it must be borne in mind that too much damp rots gut, and also that a cast which has been damped for some time becomes very limp and soft, and draws at the knots if the latter are not very carefully

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made. For this reason the writer has always preferred to test and straighten a dry cast by drawing it slowly through the hand closed tightly on it. It should be done slowly or the knots may cut the fingers; it is infinitely preferable to the old plan of drawing the gut between a piece of india-rubber. Another tip which the present writer believes in is to stretch the silk reel-line yard by yard between the hands; a dressed silk line contracts when dry, and if this stiffness is taken out of it by stretching, it runs through the rings better and casts straighter. Any one who remembers the coils of an old hair and silk undressed reel-line will know how unpleasant it was to cast with until the wiry stiff coils got limp in the water.

The gut-line being attached and straightened out the next thing is to attach the eyed May-fly, and to do this the simplest and best knot is that which was shown to the present writer by Major Turle many years ago, here it is.

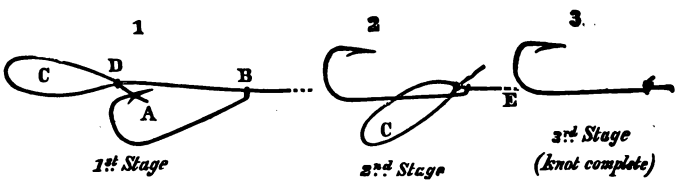

FIG. 64.

Major Turle's knot, which was first described and illustrated in the *Fishing Gazette*, is tied as follows:

"*1st Stage.*"—Pass the end of the line (A) through the hook-eye (B) and run the hook a few inches up the line out of the way; then make a "running noose" (C) with a slip-knot (D), and *draw the said knot tight.* "*2nd Stage.*"—Run down the hook again (to the position shown in *Fig.* 1), and passing the noose (C) over it, pull the gut (E) quite tight—cutting off the spare end. This completes the knot—"*3rd Stage.*"

N.B.—See the slip-noose is round the metal eye of the hook before pulling tight.

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You pass the gut once through the eye of the hook (towards the bend of it), then make a slip noose, pass the whole fly through the noose and draw the noose tight round the neck of the eye. Then the fly stands out straight at the end of the gut just as well as if it had been whipped on in the old-fashioned way.

The fly securely fastened on, the next thing is to oil it—just a touch with the brush on wings and hackle and you are ready to cast.

Opposite you, under the opposite bank, you notice a fish rising steadily at all the May-flies which sail over him. You let out line as you cast, drop the fly in the water near you once or twice to get rid of the excess of oil, and then gradually lengthen the line as you make false casts in the air until you judge you have enough out to place your fly two feet or more above the fish so that your artificial, when it alights on the water, may float on over him just as the natural flies do. Directly your fly touches the water you lower the point of your rod and point it towards the fly, and move it so that it keeps pointed towards the fly or below it, at the same time drawing in the slack line with your left hand; at the critical moment when your fly is over the fish, if he takes it, you strike, or rather "tighten on the fish," by moving the rod down stream rapidly. It is difficult to describe in words how this should be done, but I have taken my watch out of my pocket and placed it on the table in front of me and will ask you, my reader, to do the same. Let six o'clock be where you are standing and twelve o'clock the place where the fish is rising on the opposite side of the river. You should make your cast so that the fly alights on the water at one o'clock, the stream carries it towards twelve where the fish is, and your rod all the time should point to the fly as the long hand of the watch does to the minute, and at twelve o'clock, if the fish rises,

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you should strike, *not* by lifting the rod up in the air, but horizontally towards ten o'clock—that is to say, you go slowly with the rod from one to twelve and, if the fish rises, rapidly from twelve to ten or nine It will be understood, of course, that the rod is moving from right to left if the stream is running from right to left and *vice versâ*. Many anglers after making their cast let the reel-line take care of itself, and, if the fly is taken, strike by bringing the rod up to a vertical position or back over their heads. You may hook fish this way, but it is much safer to keep the rod nearly level with the water and send the hook in by a down-stream drag, having in the meantime gathered in the slack line with the left hand. This gathering in can be done also by winding in the line on the winch, a safer plan, on the whole, because you then have no slack line to manage after the fish is struck. The *first* and *chief* thing in dry fly-fishing is to make your artificial fly float over the fish in a perfectly natural manner, if you pull in the line too fast you will see the fly "drag," that is, draw across the surface; or if the stream between you and your fly is more rapid than it is where the fly swims, the stream will make the fly drag and this is fatal—not to the fish, but to your chance of his taking it. If the fly floats over the fish and is not taken let it go on for some distance before attempting to make a fresh cast. Pull the line down through the rings, lift it gently from the water, and after making a few false casts in the air (*i.e.* casts in which the fly is not allowed to touch the water) let out line again yard by yard as you cast, and put the fly again a couple of feet above him. It is not wise, if other fish are rising, to tease a fish too much, if he does not take after two or three trials leave him for a time rather than "put him down" by persistent attention.

As regards how to cast in dry fly-fishing, it depends of course on where the fish are feeding. If they are under

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your own bank—*i.e.* the bank you are standing on—get well behind them and cast up to them; never cast down stream if you can cast up. It will happen that you can only get at a rising fish by casting down stream, in that case use a longer line than necessary to actually reach him; check your rod after casting so that the fly falls two feet or so above the fish, then lower the point towards him; so that there may be no pull on the line for a yard or two. But this down-stream casting with a dry-fly is only to be recommended when an up or across stream cast is impossible.

In dry fly-fishing you must wait for a rising fish, and then put your fly above him so that it floats over him just as a natural fly does. It will often, very often, happen that the wind is against your casting up or across stream in the ordinary overhead style, then try the side-cast. Instead of bringing your rod back over your shoulder with the point well overhead, keep the point down near the surface of the land as you bring it back and make the return cast in the same way—more of the action of a reaper with a sickle than a thrasher with a flail; it requires practice of course, as your chance of catching the grass or bushes on a level with you is greater, but so is your chance of getting your fly well extended: you cut in under the wind, as it were, instead of going full sail against it. In a heavy wind, shorten your gut-cast.

As the dry-fly angler must cast across or against the wind or cut in under it often, his rod should be pretty stiff and his reel-line have more weight in it than is necessary in ordinary wet-fly casting. A ten-foot greenheart or split-cane rod is the most useful rod for single hand work.

As regards flies—well, the dry-fly angler must have a good assortment of copies of all the chief flies on which the trout feed, in different sizes, treble oughts (the smallest made) for bright daylight work in clear water when very small duns and

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midges are being taken, and larger sizes for dull days or when there is a rise of big olives, yellow duns, or, in the evening, sedges. For the last thing in June, July and August, a big cinnamon sedge is hard to beat, but do not forget your oil bottle, for a dry fly in dry fly-fishing is all the battle, next to putting it "over him" properly.

The beginner who is fishing on a slow trout stream which runs through a level rich un tr y should always remember that big fish often make a very small ring when rising, and generally rise close to the bank, especially if the water is deep. Never neglect the slightest sign of a rise under the bank, as these Bankers are nearly always fish of size and substance and worth your most careful attention.

MR. H. S. HALL'S DRESSINGS OF STANDARD PATTERNS OF DRY FLIES.

(By permission of my friend, Mr. H. S. Hall, I give here some patterns of Dry Flies, which I first published for him in the *Fishing Gazette* some years ago. They are equally good for wet fly-fishing.—R. B. M.)

[The hook numbers quoted refer to those of the "New" or eyed-hook scale, in which the small numbers represent the small sizes, and *vice versâ*. See illustration of hooks in Appendix.]

1. *The Olive Dun.*—(1) Body, olive silk. I know nothing better than Mr. Aldam's "gosling green," but it wants most delicate handling, and great care should be taken not to have too much wax on the tying silk, or it will darken the floss and spoil the fly. A ribbing of fine gold wire is an improvement; wings, dark starling; legs and whisks, hackle stained olive—not too yellow, but a dull brown olive.

(2) Body, quill dyed olive, with or without gold tag. Wings and hackle as before. This pattern admits of several shades.

(3) The same pattern as the last, with light brown fibres of hare's fur tied in for legs. Very good in April, and an excellent floater.

(4) Body, leveret's fur dyed olive, ribbed with gold wire; hackle and wings as before. This is known as the "rough spring olive." A useful variety; hook, o and oo.

2. *Hare's Ear.*—Body, hare's fur ribbed with gold, and fibres

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picked out for legs, winged with dark starling. This fly is a great favourite on the Test; hook, o or oo.

3. *The Red Quill, Grey Quill, and Ginger Quill.*—These flies are always useful, and they only differ in the colour of the hackle and whisks, though there is room for variety, if it be desirable, in the choice of quill. The red one has: body, undyed quill; legs and whisks, red hackle; wings, darkish starling. The grey and ginger are generally dressed with lighter wings; hook, o or oo, usually the smaller size. The red quill is, perhaps, the best all-round evening fly that can be used in the summer months.

4. *The Iron Blue.*—Body, quill dyed a dark blue with a violet shade. Some prefer mauve silk with mole's fur; legs and whisks, dark honey dun, the natural fly having yellow tips to its dusky blue legs; wings, from the breast of a water hen, or from the tail feather of the great titmouse; hook, oo or ooo.

5. *The "Little Marryat."*—Body, very pale buff opussum fur spun on light yellow silk; wings, medium starling; legs and whisks, the palest feather from a buff Cochin China cockerel; hook, o or oo.

6. *The Red Spinner.*—Of all the numberless patterns which have been devised to imitate the gauzy transparency of this fly, I believe this to be the best. Of late years it has been most successfully used in Hampshire, and is known as the "Detached Badger." Body detached, made of reddish brown horsehair, and firmly whipped to the hook with strong well-waxed silk; legs and wings, a "badger hackle" dressed buzz. This hackle is difficult to obtain, and is of a rusty grey in the centre (almost black), with bright shining golden tips; hook, o or oo.

7. *Wickham's Fancy.*—Body, gold tinsel ribbed from tail to head with red cock's hackle; wings, dark starling. Landrail makes a nice variety; hook, oo to 1 or 2..

8. *Flight's Fancy.*—Body, pale yellow, or primrose, floss silk ribbed with fine flat gold tinsel; wings, light starling; legs and whisks, pale buff, or, for a change, honey dun; hook, oo or ooo.

9. *The Black Gnat.*—This is how I make my pattern. On a oo or ooo hook I put a longish body of black ostrich herl, which has first been stripped. Then I cut a strip of pike scale the proper length and shape to represent the two folded wings and tie it flat on the top of the hook, taking care to show the projecting bit above mentioned. Then over and in front of the wing I take two or three turns of a small black starling's feather, and the fly is finished. It does not float very well, but in fine still weather it is very effective;

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and the pike scale, tied as I have described, will stand a great deal of whipping.

10. *The Sedge.*—(1) THE SILVER SEDGE, which I believe is no sedge at all, but an imitation of the small grass moth which flutters about in the meadows by the riverside; body, white floss silk, ribbed with silver; hackled all over with buff or light red hackle; wings, landrail; hook, 00 to 1.

(2) THE RED SEDGE (or, sedge proper); body, red fur from hare's face, or fox's ear, or from the reddest part of an opossum skin. Rib it with gold thread and wind on a red hackle from tail to head; wing, a ruddy feather from a landrail's wing; hook, 00 to 1.

(3) THE BIG SEDGE.—This is the local name, but I prefer to call it the "Cinnamon." It is a fat, toothsome morsel, nearly an inch long, and answers capitally on a moonlight night, when it is warm, still, and free from mist. I have killed many heavy fish with it, especially in September, during the harvest moon. The dressing I prefer is the same as that given for the red sedge, on a No. 2 hook, and winged with the reddest part of a cock landrail's wing, or, better still, with one of the under covert feathers of the peahen, which are very faintly mottled with a darker shade of brown.

11. *The Alder* is very useful in June, and on some rivers will kill in the May-fly season better than the drake itself. It is in great favour with the Fairford anglers, and the natural fly is very plentiful on the Colne; body, bronze-coloured peacock herl; hackle, black or a dull-coloured feather, with black centre and ruddy tips; wings, from the tail feather of a hen pheasant. There is another very good variety known as the "Button," or "red-winged alder," which should be dressed as before, only that the wing should come from the red tail feather of a partridge; hook, No. 2.

12. *The Brown Quill.*—Very useful in August and September; body, some light quill dyed in Judson's light brown. Very good imitations have been produced by taking ordinary peacock quill and bleaching it; legs and whisks, ginger; wings, medium starling; hook, 00.

13. *The Indian Yellow.*—Body, a delicate brown silk ribbed with bright yellow; legs and whisks, a rich buff; wings, from the under wing feathers of a *young* grouse; hook, 00.

14. *The Blue-winged Olive.*—This fly is larger than most of the duns of the summer months, and generally makes its appearance just at dusk, when it sometimes comes out in myriads. At Winchester in September I have seen the river covered with it, and rising fish only a few yards apart as far as one could see. Some of the heaviest fish

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I have ever killed in Hampshire have been taken with this fly; still I have never been satisfied with any of the imitations I have yet devised.

15. *The Little Sky Blue.*—This is a splendid grayling fly in August and September; in fact, all free-rising fish take it well in the warm autumn mornings from ten to midday; body, pale straw colour, of silk, quill, or fur. I have killed well with all three, but silk I like least, as it changes colour after it is wet much more than other materials; legs and whisks, light honey dun; wings, a pale delicate blue, best imitated with a jay's wing feather; hook, oo or ooo.

16. *The Red Tag.*—This is generally regarded as a grayling fly, but at times it does wonderfully well among trout. The brighter the day and the hotter the sun the better does this fly succeed. It is not generally known that when trout are "smutting"—*i.e.* feeding on that tiny black midge which baffles all imitation—they will often take a small red tag ravenously; body, peacock herl, short and fat, with a tiny red tag of floss silk, wool, or scarlet ibis feather. Floss silk looks very well when it is dry, but it shrinks up when wet, and often loses its colour; I have always found wool much more killing. At the shoulder should be wound a dark, rich, red hackle; hook, o, oo, or ooo.

17. *The Jenny Spinner.*—This is the transformation of the iron-blue dun, and is one of the most beautiful and delicate flies to be found by riverside. It should be dressed with a detached body of white horsehair tipped with a couple of turns of mulberry silk and white whisks. Tie the body to a oo or ooo hook with mulberry coloured silk to show the head and thorax of that colour. Wing it with two hackle points from a very pale blue dun cock, almost white, and let the legs be of the same colour. Or it may be dressed buzz with a pale grizzled hackle, like the red spinner, No. 6.

NOTE.—The young angler who goes to buy flies on eyed hooks will perhaps be asked whether he wants them on "turned up" or "turned down" eyes. He should look at the flies, and if the dressing of one kind is better than the other, he need not trouble whether the hook eye turns up or down—one is just as good as the other *in practice*, if not in theory.

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FISHING WITH THE NATURAL FLY

CHAPTER XVII

DIPPING, DABBING, OR DAPING

DURING the heats and droughts of summer, when the waters are low and clear, and the fish betake themselves to the shadow of the water-lilies and weeds, both the bottom and the fly fisher may practise fishing with the natural fly, of course only in waters where fishing with any bait is permitted. Indeed, it varies agreeably the somewhat monotonous pastime of the bait-fisher, and there are few rivers where it may not be practised, wherever a trout, dace, chub, or, occasionally, a carp or roach may be found. It is a method only adapted for such streams as have overhanging banks, shaded by foliage and fringed with shrubs, reeds, &c., which hide the person of the angler. The art of dipping is simply to drop a natural fly, fixed on your hook, so gently on the surface of the water that it may seem like the natural movement of the insect, and not the deceptive lure of the angler. It is a somewhat difficult operation to do this successfully, for it requires a light hand, light tackle, and the most delicate manipulation.

Let us see the tackle necessary to practise this quiet, seductive style of fishing. The length of the rod must depend

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on the situation and nature of the water. If the banks are shrouded with trees and shrubs, then a thirteen or fourteen foot rod, fitted with a light reel, will be best. If the banks are comparatively open and unsheltered, then a long rod will be necessary. One eighteen feet in length will not be too long, as it will enable the angler to keep well out of sight, and use a blow-line; in any case the rod should be stiff and the line strong, as you must hold the fish hard in these places in consequence of the branches and bushes overhanging the river. The line itself should be of fine tried stout gut, about a yard long, attached to a floss-silk line, which may be lengthened or shortened according to circumstances. The hooks should be short in the shank and neatly whipped, and of sizes adapted to the bait you use.

The living insects used as baits for this description of fishing are various. House-flies, wood-flies, stone-flies, green and grey drakes, bluebottles, moths, cockchafers, grasshoppers, beetles, ants, are used according to circumstances. Whatever fly is on the water, or whatever insect is plentiful along the river-banks or waterside, may be used with effect. Great care is, however, requisite in placing the insect on the hook, so as not to kill it or harm it. If properly hooked it ought to display all its natural motions, but it cannot do this if it is roughly handled or clumsily used. If one fly only is used, insert the hook under one of its wings, and bring it out between them at the back. If two flies are used, the first fly must be hooked between the wings, at the upper part of the back, and the second fly be placed with the head reversed, and the hook inserted under one of its wings, and come out at the back. This is an excellent mode of baiting, and generally proves very seductive. The natural May-fly is a very deadly bait, and although still much used in this way on some of the Irish lakes—especially those of Westmeath—its use is allowed on very few English

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trout streams, and even then is considered not quite the thing. The term "fly-fishing" is often used to cover a multitude of sins against the written and unwritten laws of sport, but its generally received meaning is the use only of artificial flies on or near the surface of the water. It is manifestly unsportsmanlike to nip a shot on to a fly-cast in order to sink a big red palmer or other artificial, and then to sink and draw it like a minnow and yet call it fly-fishing, or to put a gentle or worm on to your artificial fly and call it anything but bait-fishing. The young angler should avoid these shady proceedings. In baiting with a grasshopper, the hook may be placed under its head or lodged in its body, or passed through the upper part of the back. The fly-baits may be caught with a gauze-net, and kept in a tin box with perforations for air. Mr. W. J. Cummins, of Bishop Auckland, sells excellent and very cheap boxes for carrying live flies, creepers, &c. House and wood-flies are, however, apt to be too nimble for the angler when the box-lid is opened. An old powder-horn, with a few perforations, answers very well as a receptacle for these agile gentry, as only one can escape at a time through the aperture.

Dipping may be practised from the middle of May to the end of August. Warm bright days are the best for this kind of fishing, as then trout, chub, and dace may often be seen swimming along the sides of the stream under the bushes looking out for flies, caterpillars, &c., which may fall into the water. The fish, however, do not jump at the bait; they appear lazily to rise, suck in the flies as they flutter on the top, for they should never be allowed to sink beneath the water. Strike gently; do not play the fish long; tire him by keeping his head well out of the water; and then bring him quietly to the side.

In bush-fishing the angler must be divested of all encumbrances as far as possible. His equipment must be placed

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in a haversack under his coat; he must approach his scene of action noiselessly and unseen. Having fixed on a suitable spot, twirl your gut-line round the top pieces of your rod, so as to avoid the twigs and branches. Pass the point of the rod through an opening in the branches; let it project over the river; untwist the line gently by turning the rod, and then let the flies gently alight, fluttering on the surface. If there are any weeds near, so that the fly may appear to have jumped from them, so much the better. The angler must keep out of sight and make no noise. The fish—and, generally, it is big fish that are caught with the natural fly—open their lordly jaws, and generally hook themselves. If a few grubs or brandlings are thrown in ere you begin, the fish appear more greedy to swallow your bait. Everything will depend on the caution and tact of the angler, but after a fish has taken a fly, wait until he has made the downward turn before tightening on him. It may be necessary to have a small perforated bullet, the size of a pea, on the gut-line eight inches or so above the hook, not to sink the fly, but to steady it when winding or unwinding it. It also helps to hook the fish.

When the banks are more open, a longer line may be used, and the fly may be suffered to blow about by the wind, or be gently cast to some likely spot. This is difficult to accomplish; for everything like violent whipping must be scrupulously avoided. A gentle motion of the forearm must only be used, and the line brought gently round, and the bait allowed to touch the water softly. Occasionally, the fly may be gently "chucked" beneath overhanging bushes; but this is scarcely possible without the angler showing himself. On narrow rivers no reel or winch is necessary, though always an advantage, especially if you are likely to hook heavy fish.

When using beetles or cockchafers, the shield, or external

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wings, should be cut off, and the hook inserted at the back of the neck and out at the middle of the back, so as to permit the feet to hang downwards. If the water is open, and the surface rippled with a breeze, a split-shot may be attached to the line some distance above the bait, so as to sink it a few inches. This plan hardly comes within the denomination of dipping, which is generally practised in bright warm weather.

Many plans have been tried to dip with an artificial bait, but without any great success. The method recommended by Ephemera (Mr. Fitzgibbon) is perhaps the best, though it is as much a natural bait as an artificial one. He says that a "pair of wings should be made of the feathers of a landrail" (see chapter on "Artificial Flies, and how to dress them"), "and on the bend of the hook put one or two caddis. The head of one caddis should go up close to the wings. Angle with a stiff rod, about fourteen foot long, a foot-line, eight foot, and a hook Nos. 5 or 6. Let the bait float down the stream, just below the surface, then gently draw it up again, a little irregularly, by shaking the rod, and if there be a fish in the place it will be sure to take it. If you use two caddis with the wings, put the hook in at the head and out of the neck of the first, and quite through the other from the head to the tail. Two brandlings or red worms may be fished with in the same way." I have caught roach frequently with a house-fly and a caddis attached, by dipping: but of the merits of the above plan for trout I cannot speak from experience. Where there are no bushes or other shelter for the angler, an artificial one may be made of a hurdle and bushes, or other handy contrivance. It must, however, be fixed some time before the angler commences operations.

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CHAPTER XVIII

FLY-FISHING FOR SALMON

THE salmon is undoubtedly and pre-eminently the monarch of the rivers and the streams. His size, vigour, grace, and proportion stamp him as the "noblest Roman of them all." Out of the water he has long enjoyed the highest reputation; but until recently he has been simply the illustrious stranger, of whose good qualities we saw and acknowledged, but of whose history we were ignorant. We have been guilty of such gross mistakes respecting this noble fish, that, until a short time since, we were literally extirpating the salmon from our rivers. Now, however, a better system prevails under improved knowledge. Even now but few fishermen can tell how many different species of this magnificent and common fish there are in British waters. Nay, even professed ichthyologists are still at variance on many points. The following are the principal members of the salmon family of interest to anglers:—

MIGRATORY SPECIES *

The Salmon (*Salmo salar*).
The White Trout (*Salmo trutta*); also called Salmon Trout and Sea Trout.
The Bull Trout (*Salmo eriox*); very rarely takes the fly.

NON-MIGRATORY SPECIES

The Common Trout (*Salmo fario*).
The Great Lake Trout † (*Salmo ferox*).
The Grayling (*Thymallus vulgaris*).

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* For the latest and fullest account of these fish see "British and Irish Salmonidæ," by the late Dr. Francis Day; also "Salmon Problems," by Mr. Willis Bund.

† It is an open question still whether such fish as the Loch Leven

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These members of the salmon family may all be caught by the angler. They furnish him with the highest sport, amidst the most lovely and picturesque scenery; but above all, the capture of a large-sized salmon with the frail tackle of the angler demands an amount of skill, perseverance, and adaptation of means to a given end which is not often met with. It is no wonder that high prices are paid for the right of fishing for salmon, and that distant waters are visited for the purpose of enjoying this exciting sport. I shall never forget the thrill of delight with which I viewed the first salmon which fell a victim to my angling skill, under the shadow, as it were, of the old Cummeraghs, and within the sound of the hoarse surge of the Atlantic billows. I have a thousand memories haunting the spot, and a thousand kindnesses to acknowledge; but, alas! numbers of those who were with me then are in distant lands, and others gone to the "land of the leal"; and my darling golden-haired first-born rests in the sunny churchyard overlooking the vale. I next tried my 'prentice hand in the Fergus, and I have not been unsuccessful in the queenly Shannon.*

Leaving the history of the salmon to other and abler pens, I may be permitted to describe the approved method of capturing this princely fish. I will take the rod as the first, if not the most essential portion, of the salmon-fisher's equipment. In my remarks on rods in general, I have described the principle on which a rod should be made, and the material of which it should be constructed. A salmon

Trout (*Salmo Levenensis*), the Gillaroo, or Gizzard Trout, of the Irish lakes, the Great Lake Trout (*Salmo ferox*), and others, are not merely variations of the Common Trout (*Salmo fario*), caused by peculiarities in the feeding-grounds; for instance, the Gillaroo Trout feeds on a very nutritious fresh-water shellfish, which gives colour and flavour to its flesh, and also hardens its stomach from the quantity of shells taken into it.

* Mr. Burgess himself has been dead many years now.

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rod should be from 16 to 18 feet in length. Though not one of the shortest or weakest of mankind, I have found the 20-foot rod sometimes become too tiresome and unwieldy for daily use. A rod 18 feet in length at the outside, with a top of greenheart or of split cane, springing gracefully from top to butt, balanced with a winch containing from 80 to 100 yards of stout line, is one that would delight the heart of the most ardent brother of the angle. The winch may be one of those containing a break spring, or what the makers call a spring washer. The new composition reel, which is at once light, compact, easily worked, not deranged by heat or water, seems to have every essential quality of a good reel, though time alone can prove its endurance.* The running line should be of plaited silk waterproofed, and the gut-line of the strongest gut—the three-ply twisted is generally recommended. The two or three links next the fly should be of the strongest single gut, well tested, and selected with great care. The lengths may be joined together with the single fisherman's knot; but the knot elsewhere described, with a buffer whipping, is the best of all. Salmon flies are dressed somewhat differently to those used for trout. They are so whipped as to leave a small but strong loop of stout gut at the extreme end of the shank, close to the head of the fly.† The end of the fly-cast is slipped through this, and knotted with a single knot; a running hitch-knot, or figure-of-8 knot, is then made round the gut, and, when drawn tight, makes a strong, neat, compact knot which, while firm, admits of the fly being changed

* These ebonite reels strengthened with brass are very good, but for rough work nothing equals a well-made plain-check brass reel with handle on the revolving plate.

† Salmon-flies are also now dressed on hooks with metal eyes: those with a smooth eye should alone be used, as the gut will very soon be cut by a sharp edge of metal in a badly made eye.

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easily when required. Some anglers attach a drop-fly some 4 feet from the end fly, but the best anglers do not. One fly will be found quite enough to manœuvre and manage properly by the tyro in salmon-fishing.

Ere we proceed to the consideration of the flies themselves, and the hooks on which they ought to be dressed, perhaps the method of casting a salmon-line and manœuvring the flies ought to be considered, as they differ somewhat from the ordinary fly-fishing, in consequence of the greater length and weight both of the rod and the line, twenty-five and even forty yards of line having been frequently thrown by skilled anglers. The best and clearest directions for salmon-casting are those given by Ephemera, a well-known angler in salmon rivers, and an author of no little repute.* He says:

"The salmon rod is to be held with both hands, one above, and the other below, the winch. In throwing from the right side, the right hand must grasp the rod above the winch, the left below it. In casting from the left shoulder, the left hand must be above and the right below; that is, it must clutch the rod between the winch and the extreme butt-end of the rod. In fishing down a river on its right side, the left shoulder cast should be used; in fishing from the left bank, the right shoulder-throw is the proper one. Stand at the head of a stream, looking down it as it runs from you, the bank on your right side is the right-hand bank, that on the left the left-hand shore. In ascending a river, the left-hand bank is on your right side, and the right-hand bank on your left. This explanation may be deemed super-

* Since Ephemera's time many excellent works dealing with salmon-fishing have been published, among the best being "A Book of Angling," by Francis Francis; "Salmon and Trout Fishing," in the Badminton Library; and "By Hook and by Crook," by Fraser Sandeman.

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fluous, but I fancy it will enable me hereinafter to be more perspicuous than if I had not given it.

"I'll suppose the salmon-fisher coming down the right side of a river, and that above him, to his right, are cliffs or trees—how can he bring back to that side over his right shoulder, rod and line, without causing them to come into collision with the impediments behind him on his right? He can do so in two ways—the first in greater part wrong, the other perfectly right. The first and unfinished style I call the back-handed cast. It is performed thus: The point of the rod held nearly perpendicularly up before you; the forward and upward slanting direction being very slight indeed; the point of the rod is swept to the left, and with it the line to its entire development; then the hands, no, not both, but the right one, wrist and forearm are turned over, backwards, to the right, and the rod brought round in the same direction; the line is turned over circularly, and propelled down or obliquely across the current. I frequently throw in this way, merely for the purpose of easing the arms, fatigued from the monotonous action of throwing overhand from the right or left shoulder. It will be seen that the effect of this throw will be to carry the line clear from the bank over the current's course, and cause it to alight down stream to the right. Notwithstanding, the action of the arms must be cramped, for it is reversed in the overhanded throw, and the cast must be very limited in extent. Besides, when fishing from the right bank of a river, the fly can never be so neatly worked against the water with the right hand holding the rod above the winch, as when the left hand holds it there."

The second method of casting from the right bank, and which is the proper one, I will now explain:

"You hold your rod, the left hand being above the winch, and the right one beneath it; left leg foremost, and left side towards the river.

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"You bring your rod round, by, over, and beyond the point of your left shoulder, which motion will carry the line to its full extent upwards over the bed of the river, and feeling that the line is so extended, you bring back a little, in the direction you are going to cast, the point of the rod, and making use chiefly of the action of the left arm, you propel the line forward by a motion you give the rod, as if you were going to strike at something hovering in the air before you. The forward motion of the rod will be checked at a short distance, unless you bend forward with it, and the line will be sent straight out, the fly and gut-line to which it is attached coming first in contact with the water.

"Giving the arms and bending the body too much with the rod, in making the cast, is a very bad habit, as it brings the point of the rod too close to the surface of the water, deadens its elasticity, and causes the line to fall in a loose and slovenly manner on the water. This left shoulder cast is only absolutely necessary when you are fishing from beneath the right bank of a river, and have behind you impediments to a right-hand sweep of your rod and line. If the right bank be flat or shelving, if it be clear of obstructions, I can see no material objection to right-shoulder casting from off it.

"The straight right-shoulder cast is done thus: The right hand holds the rod above the winch, the left below it, the right side is next the river, and of course the right foot is foremost. You bring your rod and line boldly and freely in a fine, easy, wide, semicircular sweep over your right shoulder, and then you send them forwards by communicating to the right forearm sharp action, as if you were going to hit something elevated before you with the soft part of your closed hand, on the little-finger side.

"If all this compound action—bringing back the rod and

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line over the right shoulder, and then sharply sending them forward—be performed dashingly and energetically without nervousness, stint of sweep and strength, your fly will be sent straight away to its destination, similarly to but not so swiftly as an arrow shot from above at an object sitting beneath you on the water, at a distance of five-and-twenty or thirty yards. The straight casts, whether from the left or right shoulder, are, generally speaking, the best. At any rate, executed by a proficient, they are always the neatest, and should by beginners be the first learnt and practised to perfection.

"They can be performed with great accuracy, so as to enable the angler to determine almost to an inch the precise spot on which his fly is to fall. They cause the fly and casting-line to touch the water first, and enable you to commence working the fly, or showing it to the fish, sooner than you could do if much of the winch-line came in contact with the water simultaneously with the casting-line. The effect of the straight-cast is less disturbance to the water than that of any species of cast; the only defect that can be attached to it is, that you cannot by its means throw so far as by using the side, or rolling-cast, but you can throw it more neatly.

"Your fly and gut-line must fall always first upon the water, and not roll on it by means of the winch-line first coming into contact with the surface. The rolling descent of the line and fly should be avoided with mortal might and main.* The error of the majority of salmon-fishers lies in their working the fly through the water with too much force

* In the modern "switch" and "spey" casts, this is exactly what the line is made to do; the line unrolls itself over the surface, and the fly is the last to touch the water. The angler who can fish the "spey" cast well is to be envied, it is worth any amount of practice to learn it.—Ed.

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and rapidity. I advise gentle working of the fly through and against the water, with no more action than is required

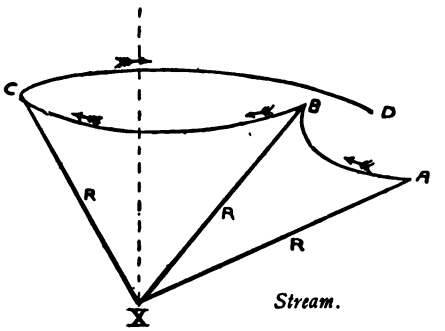

FIG. 65.—OVERHAND CAST.

In this diagram an attempt has been made to indicate the course of the rod-point in making an overhand cast. The angler is supposed to be standing at X, facing the stream S, with his rod-point at rest at A and 25 or 30 yards of line out in the stream. The first movement of the rod-point is from A to B, and the object of it is to lift the line so that it lies on the surface of the stream and not drowned in it. The next movement of the rod-point is a bold sweep from the point B in front of the angler to the point C behind him. This is the "backward cast" of the fly, and if properly done it causes the line to extend out straight behind the angler ready for the "forward cast," in which the rod-point moves from C to D in a bold, strong, forward sweep. This forward motion should be made directly the line is well extended behind, but not sooner, and it is a good plan to turn your head and watch the line in the air behind you, and just at the moment the fly is farthest away from you begin the forward cast. Of course the time the rod-point rests at C is only a second or two. R stands for Rod.—ED.

to display before the eyes of the fish the artificial bait attractively: with no more speed than can be easily compassed by a pursuing fish."

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These remarks embody the essential principles of casting

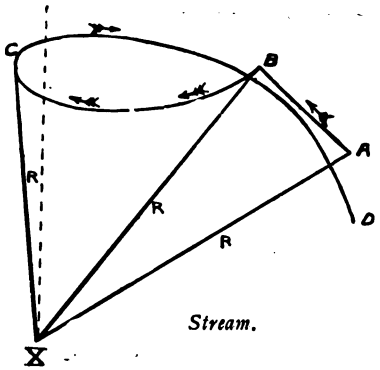

FIG. 66.—THE SPEY CAST OR SWITCH.

To make this beautiful and bold cast well the angler must have a pretty sharp stream (in order to get a pull on the line when recovering it) running close to where he stands. He should stand sideways to it looking down stream. In the diagram an attempt has been made to show the course of the rod-point in making the spey cast. The angler is supposed to be standing at X, in or on the brink of the stream; his rod-point is for the moment at rest at A with a long line in the water down stream. The first movement of the rod-point is from A to B, and its object is to lift the line up to the surface of the water. The next movement is from B in front of the angler to C almost over his head or but very little behind, at this point the rod motion is stopped. If the movement has been properly made the middle of the line comes in first towards the angler in a reversed ɔ-shaped curve, the rod forming the straight down stroke of the ɔ, and the fly drops in the water almost at the angler's feet. This is the time to begin the forward cast, at first slowly but rapidly increasing in force as you feel the pull of the line, and you carry this movement from C to D, bringing the rod-point down sharply almost to the water. R stands for Rod.—ED.

the salmon-fly. With respect to manœuvring the fly on the

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water, there are no such differences of opinion as in fishing for trout. There are no up and down stream men. The fly must not be allowed to float down with the current, but be worked up against it, up and down beneath the surface, not dangled on the top, as in dipping. The rod must not be allowed to remain still, but be worked up and down, gradually drawing the fly towards the point of the rod, up stream, until it sweeps over the possible haunts of the salmon. The fly, under this motion, seems like a thing of life from the action of the water, and when the waters are high and not too cloudy, a large fly possesses an attraction which few salmon can resist. It will be obvious, that with a 16 to 18 ft. rod, the angler has no light work to perform when fishing for salmon.

Cast well over towards the other side of the stream, but to a point a little lower than opposite where you are standing. After casting lower the point of the rod to about 2 feet from the water, then as the stream brings the fly round, keep your rod pointed to the fly and keep on gently raising and lowering the point a little until the fly has come round to your side; wade or walk down a yard or so, and then repeat the cast until you have covered all the water worth trying in places where the fish take the fly. As a rule, in deep strong rivers fish the fly deep and slowly; in smaller shallower waters the fly should be worked more and more quickly.

The salmon-fisher must never be disheartened. If there are salmon in the water, there is a chance of catching them by any one possessing the necessary skill and no little perseverance. With a creature so impulsive, the angler need never despair. Even though the stream runs pure as crystal, and the water is low, fine tackle and suitable flies will do wonders.

He will sometimes rise at your fly, refuse it, and come again. This will try the angler's patience, test his experi-

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ence, and prove his skill. Do not be in a hurry; for haste in striking may spoil all. Some able sportsmen will say —"Cover him again directly"; others advocate a few minutes' rest. Perhaps the latter is the best plan in well-fished waters. Again and again will a salmon rise at the tempting bait, and still refuse it, and yet be hooked at last. If he should refuse altogether let him remain quiet for a few minutes, and try a fresh fly.* If this does not tempt him, try a smaller fly of the first pattern, and work the fly so that it sinks a few inches beneath the surface. At length he will shows his "silvery sides" in earnest. If you can help it, do not strike in a hurry, or you may jerk the fly from him. Watch for the turn after he has seized the fly, and then strike. If you feel the fish before this occurs, you will of course strike at once. The rattle of the reel announces that the contest has begun. If the salmon is fresh run, he will seize the bait with eagerness and hook himself. When the water is low and bright much judgment is required.

Away goes the startled and indignant fish; swift runs the line from the reel; and then the angler watches his opportunity to check the mad career of the fish. He can only do this by letting it feel the pressure of the line and the hook as he turns, and away it dashes again, and perhaps indulges in leaps from the water in its efforts to escape. If you can do so let him feel the line when he gets to a long distance, so as to induce him to turn, and exhaust himself by rapid races, backwards and forwards. Beware of bullying the fish when first hooked, or he may lead you a pretty dance over rapids and shallows and through pools, where the angler must follow. If the banks are clear of rocks and trees, it is not difficult to do this; but, otherwise, the chances are all in favour of the fish. A

* Messrs. Farlow & Co. sell a special salmon-fly for "Salmo irritans," as Mr. Andrew Lang christened these short-rising fish.

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few turns will show the temper of the fish, and he must be treated accordingly. Some fish are sulky, and lie like a stone at the bottom, and will not stir even when well stoned. Others take to the leaping and jumping business. Some dash to and fro, while others take the straight course, either up or down river. Patience and coolness are requisite, for the angler is apt to be carried away by the excitement, lose his presence of mind, commits some mistake, and snap goes some part of the tackle. Do not listen, however, to the advice of a bystander, but use your own judgment. If you fail, you will, at least, have gained experience, while, if you see the fish turn exhausted on his side, your pleasure will be the more intense. A fair-sized fish may take you an hour to kill; others will occupy your time and skill for two or three hours.*

While on this part of the subject, let me give the young salmon-fisher a few general hints:

When tired, leave off fishing until "tired nature is restored."

Do not fish when your style is careless or indifferent. It is better to take a nap than be surprised by a sharp-set salmon.

You must be up early to obtain the best casts.

Always play your fish with as little line as possible. Put on more strain as soon as he exhibits signs of weariness.

When the fish leaps in the air, lower the top of your rod, so that the line may fall slack.

Endeavour to direct the fish into clear and open water away from narrow channels, choked bottoms, or overhanging banks.

* The more modern allowance is a minute a pound, so that a fifteen-pound fish should be killed in about fifteen minutes; but there are no rules without exceptions, and in no sport are there more surprises in store than in angling—the unexpected often happens.

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Do not attempt to haul in the line with your hands. Run backwards if you have the opportunity. Always use your legs rather than your hands.* If in a boat, and the salmon rushes towards you, it may be imperatively necessary to haul in the line through the rings to let it fall at your feet, and so recover control of the fish, but wind in the slack as soon as possible. In any case, and *in all cases, keep your rod-point well up,* so that the spring of the rod bears the strain, and always give line when the fish makes a dangerous rush.

Fish the water well, and do not think the time misspent, if there be salmon in the river; for in no sport is perseverance better rewarded than in salmon-fishing.

It requires great experience to know the haunts of the salmon. On most rivers guides are accessible who know the run of the water, and the most likely places for the fish. Without such help the angler will have to exercise his judgment, which will be assisted by the study of the following hints:

Salmon, as a rule, lie on a stony, and avoid smooth, muddy, and even gravelly bottoms. They are seldom to be found in a long, straggling reach of shallow water, which does not lead directly to some pool, or still, deep water. A swift stream, on the contrary, running into some still watery depths, is much frequented by the best fish. Salmon are seldom found in the middle of the current, they avoid it, and lie at the sides, close to pieces of rock. Where the stream is but light, and equally diffused, salmon are quite as likely to be in the middle of the stream as at the sides. They have a fancy for the quiet water between two currents formed by pieces of rock intercepting the stream. Where the streams unite, there is a favourite salmon lie.

* In playing a salmon in a river, endeavour to keep opposite to him, whether he runs up or down.

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I have pointed out, in a previous chapter, the method of bottom-fishing for salmon. I will now touch upon the ticklish subject of the flies.

There are some anglers who affect to believe that it little matters what combination of colours or materials you use—salmon will rise at them. This we do not believe, though form is perhaps of less consequence in salmon-fishing than in fishing for trout. The size of the fly is, however, of more importance. When the waters are high, large flies are freely taken; when low and clear, smaller flies are imperatively necessary. Old anglers used to affirm, that in dull weather a bright fly should be used, and in bright weather a dull fly. Modern anglers know better than this, and practice has confirmed their knowledge. Bright insects belong to sunny weather, as philosophy and reason have pointed out.

Before I proceed to describe some standard salmon flies, let me advise the young angler to make his own.* He will find it a great advantage, and a source of great recreation; and to enable him to judge of how they should look, illustrations of half a dozen favourites are given.

The "Jock Scott."—Tag, silver twist and light yellow silk; tail, a topping and Indian crow; butt, black herl; body, in two equal sections, the first light yellow silk ribbed with fine silver tinsel; above and below are placed three or more toucan's according to size of hook, extending slightly beyond the butt and followed with three or more turns of black herl. The second half, black silk with a natural black hackle down it and ribbed with silver lace and silver tinsel; throat, gallina; wings, two strips of black turkey with white tips, below; two strips of bustard, and grey mallard, with strands of golden pheasant tail, peacock (sword feather), red macaw, and blue and yellow dyed swan over; having two strips of mallard and a topping above; sides, jungle fowl; cheeks, chatterer; horns, blue macaw; head, black herl.

* The best guide in salmon fly-making is Captain Hale's Salmon Flies, and How to Tie Them. London: Sampson Low, Marston & Co.

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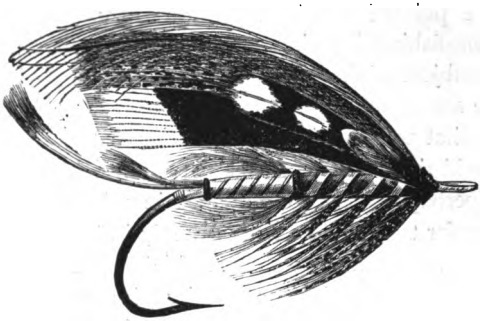

FIG. 67.—THE "JOCK SCOTT."

The "Durham Ranger."—Tag, silver twist and light yellow silk; tail, a topping and Indian crow; butt, black herl; body, two turns of orange silk, two turns dark orange seal's fur; the rest, which is about half, black seal's fur; ribbed, silver lace and silver tinsel;

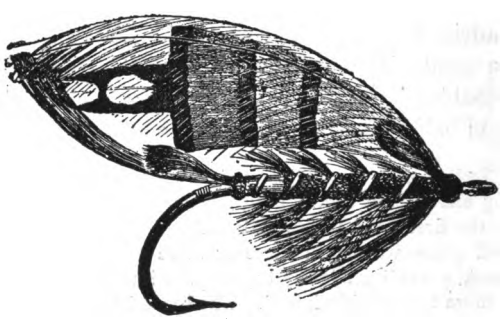

FIG. 68.—THE "DURHAM RANGER."

hackle, from orange seal's fur, a white coch-y-bonddu dyed orange; throat, light blue hackle; wings, four golden pheasant tippets overlapping, as illustrated, and enveloping two projecting jungle fowl back to back; and a topping; cheeks, chatterer; horns, blue macaw; head, black Berlin wool.

The "Childers."—Tag, silver twist and light blue silk; tail, a topping with strands of red macaw, powdered blue macaw, and pintail; butt, black herl; body, two turns of light yellow silk continuing with light yellow seal's fur, leaving one-fifth at the shoulder for scarlet

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seal's fur; ribbed, silver lace and silver tinsel; hackle, a white furnace hackle dyed light yellow; throat, a scarlet hackle and light widgeon; wings, golden pheasant tippet and tail, turkey, silver

FIG. 69.—THE "CHILDERS."

pheasant, pintail, summer duck, bustard, powdered blue macaw, parrot, red macaw, and gallina, with two strips of mallard above and a topping; horns, blue macaw; cheeks, chatterer; head, black herl.

The "Butcher."—Tag, silver twist and dark yellow silk; tail, a topping, teal, and powdered blue macaw; butt, black herl; body, in four equal divisions—beginning with light red-claret, and continuing

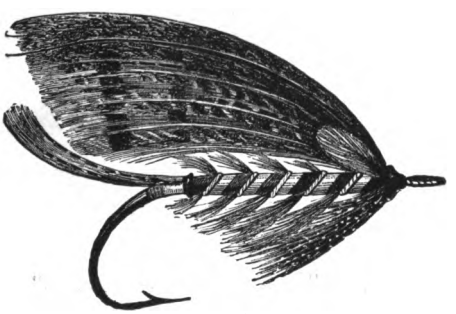

FIG. 70.—THE "BUTCHER."

with light blue, dark red-claret, and dark blue seal's furs; ribbed, silver tinsel (preceded on large hooks by silver lace); hackle, natural black, from light red-claret seal's fur; throat, yellow hackle

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and gallina; wings, one tippet feather, and a breast feather from the golden pheasant, back to back, tied edgeways as illustrated, the points of the breast feather extending to the length of the wing. Both well covered on the side with slight strips of teal, golden

FIG. 71.—THE "POPHAM."

pheasant tail, gallina, bustard, and peacock wing; with strands of parrot and swan dyed yellow, and with two strips of mallard at top; horns, blue macaw; cheeks, chatterer; head, black herl.

The "Popham."—Tag, gold twist; tail, a topping and Indian

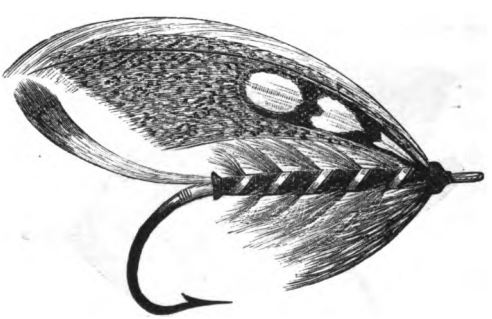

FIG. 72.—"THUNDER AND LIGHTNING."

crow; butt, black herl; body, in three equal sections butted with black herl. The first dark red orange silk, ribbed with fine gold tinsel having Indian crow above and below, as illustrated; the second, or middle joint, yellow silk with similar ribbing and crow's feathers as before; the third light blue silk and silver ribbing, with

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the Indian crow repeated; hackle, at the throat only, jay; wings, tippet, teal, gallina, golden pheasant tail, parrot, light brown mottled turkey, bustard, red macaw, yellow macaw (swan dyed yellow instead of yellow macaw for large sizes), with two strips of mallard above, and a topping; cheeks, chatterer; horns, blue macaw; head, black herl.

"*Thunder and Lightning.*"—Tag, gold twist, and yellow silk; tail, a topping; butt, black herl; body, black silk; ribbed, gold tinsel; hackle, from first turn of tinsel, orange; throat, jay; wings, mallard, in strips with a topping: sides, jungle fowl; horns; blue macaw: head, black herl.

I can only indicate a few of the varied assortment of salmon flies which find favour with salmon-fishers in this elementary guide. If the young angler is puzzled in choosing a fly, he should always observe one point—to suit the size of the fly to the depth and clearness of the water, using brilliant flies in the sunshine, and dull flies in murky weather. Salmon will rise when the barometer is rising, but not so well when it falls, and, as a rule, they do not take well in the middle of the day.

All the leading fishing-tackle makers now publish catalogues in which will be found lists of all the modern standard patterns of salmon flies. The Badminton Library volume on "Salmon and Trout Fishing" gives illustrated descriptions of all the best. Those who would learn how to tie salmon flies will find Captain Hale's book on this subject invaluable, as also "A Book of Angling," by the late Francis Francis. Mr. Francis was for very many years angling editor of *The Field*, and his book is undoubtedly the best general book on all branches of angling ever published.

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CHAPTER XIX

SOME NOTES ON SEA-FISHING.

In this age of excursions, when everybody, more or less, passes some time at the seaside, it may be useful to give a few hints as to the sport which may be obtained by the angler, or rather by one who uses a line and hook by the shore, on the "deep sea wave," or in a tidal river or estuary.

Of late years rod-fishing for all kinds of sea fish has become very popular, and special rods for this work are made by all the best rod-makers, although for most purposes a strong greenheart or whole cane pike rod will answer admirably. The angler who intends to fish in salt water should purchase an excellent shilling guide entitled "Angling in Salt Water," by John Bickerdyke, published at the *Bazaar* Office, Strand, London.

Far up the rivers, by the side of old piles, bridge piers, or near a boat stage, some excellent sport may be obtained by fishing for smelts, crabs, and flounders, with rod and line, baiting with worm, or a piece of mussel. Flounders bite freely, and have but little fear of the line. Whiting, of fair size, will also take a lug worm or a bit of fresh fish, nicely wrapped over the hook, freely, if fished for about a foot from the bottom, where the stream is not too strong. A piece of eel chopped will attract a smelt in tidal rivers.

When mackerel are off the coast they may be caught freely from a boat with a rod and line, or a line only, if the boat is rowed through the shoal, and the hook baited with a piece of red cloth, or piece of fresh fish. The spoon bait is also attractive to the larger and better fish. It may be dragged after the boat, or leaded and cast with the rod.

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Whiting and turbot, and other flat fish, are attracted by the sand-eel, found on the sea-shore. The hooks are tied by short lengths of line to a crossbar of wood fixed to the principal line, and the hooks much smaller than those used in ordinary sea-fishing.

Hake, bream, ling, conger-eel, gurnet, and several kinds of flat fish are caught from a boat, in the cool of the evening and during the night, in from two to seven fathoms of water, with a strong sea-line and a large hook, which puts an ordinary angler's hook entirely in the shade.

Hake is a common fish on some parts of the coast of the United Kingdom, though it is seldom seen inland. It somewhat resembles the cod in shape, and they are caught of all weights in the autumn months. They are fished for on a sandy bottom, a mile or two from shore, at varying depths, ranging from three to six fathoms. A sinker is first placed at the end of the line, and the depth ascertained and marked by a link on the line. The hook is then baited with a piece of the tail of the fish, rolled round so as the white flesh is seen, and the hook comparatively hidden. If fresh fish is not obtainable, salt may be used, but it should be soaked carefully before using; the bait, sinker, and line is then cast over the side, so that the bait nearly touches the bottom. The spare end is belayed, or fastened, to the boat seat or suitable place. The fisherman holds the line in his hand, and if an adept, he has one in each hand, which he "saws" over the side of the boat, which gives the bait an "up and down" motion. The boat is motionless, save from the heaving of the swell, for it is held by a large stone or grapnel. Suddenly, without previous warning, the fisherman feels a sharp tug at one of his lines, he lets the other line run to its length, and commences to haul in the fish with both hands, so that the line falls in coils at his feet. The weight of the fish is not so perceptible as might be

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imagined until it nears the surface, then its great mouth and eyes are anything but pleasant objects to the timorous angler. Quickness and dexterity is now requisite to lift in the fish, or else he will soon escape. As soon as he is in the boat, strike him with a boat-stretcher behind the head, so as to kill him by breaking the spinal cord. A sharp knife will aid you in slicing a longitudinal piece from his tail, with which to bait the hook, and the same process is repeated.

The above plan of catching sea fish may vary in different localities. I have described the plan which I have found to answer along the western and southern coasts of Ireland and England. It is equally successful in the Bay of Galway as off the Lizard or in the Downs. When lying at Spithead, I had no difficulty in catching a large number of fish from the stern of the vessel.

Ling, which is a much esteemed Lenten fish, for it may be preserved by salt, and dried so as to retain its rich oleaginous flavour better than many and better known species, requires a little extra care. The first *large* fish I ever caught was a ling, and his formidable jaws were anything but pleasant to look at. I had caught him certainly, but I little knew what to do with him, for he was about five feet long. The "old admiral," a well-known fisherman in county Waterford, who was with me in the *Little Gipsy*, fortunately came to my assistance, or else it is possible that the fish would have caught me, for the line had become entangled round my legs, and the fish was thumping the sides of the boat with its tail, the power of which trollers know when they attempt to land a jack before it is exhausted, and in appearance a ling is not unlike a gigantic pike. The admiral broke its back, and I looked at my prize in amazement. I was, however, roused from my reverie by an immense conger-eel being hauled into the boat. Through the clumsiness of the fisherman, the hook came out before

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the death blow was given him, and the savage fish snapped at his leg, but fortunately seized the boat seat, where he left the marks and the points of several of his teeth, when his head was stove in and further mischief prevented. I had the skin of a similar brute hanging among my other trophies for a long time, as a "caution," as the Yankees would say, against being too venturesome.

For the benefit of my town-bred readers visiting at the seaside, let me caution them against attempting to fish from a boat unless they have the assistance of a practised hand, for an accident is not unlikely, in consequence of the power of the fish, and the necessity of killing them immediately. Smaller fish are kept alive in the "wells" of regular fishing-boats and smacks. I am now writing for the behoof of amateurs.

Some sport, or rather fun, may be obtained by the youngsters at the seaside, by bobbing for crabs from a pier-head or projecting point of rock. A cinder is tied to a piece of cord, properly weighted and dropped along the bottom, inch by inch, in all the likely places for a crab to hide. As soon as the cinder comes near his claws he seizes it firmly, and with proverbial obstinacy holds on until he is drawn to the surface.

A fisherman will gladly take a stranger with him for a night's fishing for "a consideration," and to those in quest of a new sensation I recommend the investment.

Perhaps the best sport obtainable where sea bass abound (Fowey, in Cornwall, is a good place) is to fish for them with a salmon rod line and fly (any ordinary medium size salmon-fly, with a couple of strips of white feather added to the wing, will do) or a bright spinning bait. If a spoon bait is used, see that the hooks are not secured with a steel split-ring, as salt water destroys the strength of the split-ring, as you will find when you strike an 8 or 10 lb. bass.

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If you are fishing from a boat, get your boatman to row you where the seagulls are hovering near the surface. The bass will not be far off, as both birds and fish are chasing and feeding on the small fry which you will now and then see jump out as a bass makes a rush among them.

In estuaries frequented by bass they may often be taken as they come up with the tide by live-baiting with a small flat-fish. You want a running line and strong salmon-gut and a cork float; use one large hook and cast the bait out so that it can be seen by the bass swimming up the river and strike the instant you get a bite. It is much like Thames live-bait fishing for trout, in which you let the stream carry your live bait down to where you have seen a trout feed.

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APPENDIX

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Name of Fish.	Haunts.	Time of Year.	Spawning Season.	Depth.	Principal Baits.			
1. Salmon . . .	Swift streams flowing to sea	Feb. to Oct.	Winter	Top and bottom	—	Fly a.	Worm	Spinning Baits
2. Trout . . .	Swift deep stream	Feb. to Sept.	Ditto	Ditto	Minnow	Fly a.	Ditto	Ditto
3. Pike	Flaggy rivers and ponds	July to Feb.	March	Midwater	Live fish baits	—	—	—
4. Perch . . .	Open rivers	Ditto	Ditto	Bot. and mid.	Minnow	—	Ditto	—
5. Chub . . .	Shaded ditto	Ditto	April	Top and bottom	Minnow	Fly.	Ditto	Cheese p.
6. Grayling . .	Swift streams	Ditto	—	Ditto	—	Fly a.	—	Greaves
7. Bream . . .	Sluggish ditto	Ditto	July	Bottom	—	—	Worm	—
8. Barbel . . .	Swift gravel streams	Ditto	June	Ditto	—	—	—	Greaves
9. Carp . . .	Ponds	Ditto	May	Ditto	—	—	—	Sweet p.
10. Prussian ditto.	Ditto	Ditto	Ditto	Midwater	—	—	Worm	Ditto
11. Roach . . .	Rivers	Ditto	Ditto	Bottom	—	Fly n.	—	Plain paste
12. Dace . . .	Ditto	Ditto	March	Midwater	—	Fly n.	—	Ditto
13. Tench . . .	Muddy ponds and rivers	Ditto	June	Ditto	—	—	—	—
14. Rudd . . .	Rivers	Ditto	—	Bottom	—	—	Worm	Plain paste
15. Pope . . .	Ponds	Ditto	—	Ditto	—	—	—	Ditto
16. Miller's Thumb	Rivulets	Ditto	—	Ditto	—	—	Worm	—
17. Stone Loach .	Ditto	Ditto	—	Ditto	—	—	Ditto	—
18. Gudgeon . .	Streams and rivers	Ditto	—	Ditto	—	—	Ditto	—
19. Eels	Muddy rivers and ponds	All the year.	—	Ditto	—	Fly n.	Ditto	—
20. Bleak . . .	Clear streams	July to Feb.	—	2 in. from surface	—	—	Ditto	—
21. Minnows . .	Swift streams	Ditto	July	Bottom	—	—	Ditto	Plain paste

Note.—The above dates, &c., are necessarily only generally correct, as seasons, &c., vary in different districts.
Fly a, means artificial fly, and fly n means natural fly.

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THE STANDARD YACHT OUTFIT FOR SEA-FISHING

ALL yachtsmen ought to be provided with a certain amount of sea fishing-tackle; but the majority of them, knowing not what to take, take nothing, trusting to local supplies. Messrs. S. Allcock and Co., of Redditch, the wholesale fishing-tackle makers, have just brought out a sea-fishing outfit for yachts, &c., in a basket, the whole to retail for £3 3s.' That it is comprehensive will be seen from the fact that the Standard Yacht Outfit, No. 1, contains:

1 sea line, No. 2933, 50 hooks, bulter or spiller.
1 sea line, No. 1121, No. 3, offing or deep sea line.
1 sea line, No. 595½B, No. 3, bass or pollack.
1 sea line, No. 1120, No. 1, whiting and flat fish.
1 sea line, No. 824, harbour or boat line.
Gaff hook.
Bat and disgorger.
2 dozen hooks to twisted rust-proof wire.
2 dozen hooks to gimp, No. 129L.
3 dozen hooks to twisted gut, No. 128L.
1 dozen mackerel flies, No. 668.
2 dozen brass box swivels, assorted.
4 patent leads, with wire suspenders.
1 dozen barrel leads, assorted sizes.
1 mackerel sand-eel.
½ dozen sand-eels, assorted, Nos, 607, 608, 1123.
6 sea otters, No. 139, assorted sizes, 2 of No. 1, 2 of No. 2, 1 of No. 3, 1 of No. 4; total, 6.
Hooks, tinned, round bent, No. 199, 25 each, sizes 2, 3, 4, and 100 each of 6, 8, and 10.
Limerick hooks. tinned, extra strong, No. 185F.E.S,T., 25 each, sizes, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
1 paternoster, with 3 whalebone chopsticks.
1 paternoster, No. 2464.
½ dozen twisted gut snoods, No. 116C, ¼ dozen each, 1 and 2 yards.
2 hand lines, 80 yards of No. 12, and 60 yards of No. 8.
2 hand lines, 40 yards of No. 5, and 30 yards of No. 2.
1 dozen snoodings, 10 yards of No. 96.
Basket and tray.
Knife and cutting tray.

The same firm have just brought out a Patent Fish Hook Wrapper. Hooks being usually retailed by one dozens, Messrs. S.

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Allcock and Co. have long seen the necessity of some method of putting up small assortments of hooks in suitable quantities and sizes for general use. They have arranged to supply all leading kinds of hooks in one or other form of wrapper, and assorted in those sizes that experience proves most suitable to the general requirements of anglers.

USEFUL RECIPES FOR ANGLERS

To keep Moth from Feathers and Tackle.—Pepper them profusely and keep them from the damp. Tobacco-leaf cut small and dispersed among the feathers and tackle is very useful. Put no faith in camphor, as it evaporates. Turn the tackle and feathers out and expose them to the air once or twice in the winter.

Varnish for Hooks and Tackle.—Dissolve shellac, or even sealing-wax, in double the bulk of spirits of wine; allow it to dry before using. One application is sufficient.

Varnish for Rods.—The best coachmakers' varnish. Two coats, each thoroughly dried, is requisite.

White Wax.—2 oz. of best resin, ¼ oz. of bees'-wax, simmer for ten minutes in a pipkin; add ¼ oz. of tallow, and simmer for a quarter of an hour; pour the whole into a basin of water, and work it about with the fingers until it is tough and pliable.

Liquid Wax.—Dissolve some cobbler's wax in spirits of wine; shake up before using, and lay it on the silk with a feather. It is capital for weak or frayed silk, as the spirit evaporates and leaves the wax behind.

DIRECTIONS FOR STAINING GIMP

Soak brass gimp in a solution of bichlorate of platinum, mixed in about the proportion of one part of platinum to eight or ten of water, until it has assumed the colour desired. This will take from a quarter of an hour to two or three hours, according to the strength of the solution, then dry the gimp before the fire, and, *whilst warm*, with a brush give it a coat of "lacquer."

The above process is only applicable to brass gimp; copper and silver gimp do not take the stain properly.

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TO STAIN GUT THE COLOUR OF WEEDS, WATER, ETC.

Make an infusion of onion coatings as before directed, and when quite cold put the gut into it, and let it remain until the hue becomes as dark as required. A strong infusion of green tea will dye gut a useful colour.

So will warmed writing ink; the gut to be steeped in it a few minutes, and immediately afterwards to be washed clean in spring water. You can obtain another good colour by steeping gut for three or four minutes in a pint of boiling water, in which you have put a teaspoonful of alum, a bit of logwood the size of a hazel-nut, and a piece of copperas the size of a pea. To make gut a water colour, take a teaspoonful of common red ink, add to it as much soot, and about a third of a teacupful of water; let them simmer for about ten minutes; when cool, steep your line until it be stained to your fancy.

This is a very good colour for the purpose, but should be applied gradually, taking out your gut frequently to examine the depth of the tint, lest it should become too dark.

CREEPER AND STONE FLY FISHING

[I am indebted to my friend, Mr. Francis M. Walbran, of Leeds, for this account of Creeper and Stone Fly Fishing.—R. B. M.]

Upon many occasions in the course of my angling experiences have I witnessed the confusion caused by the application of the name "May Fly" to two totally distinct species of the insect world —the one being the "Green Drake" so prevalent upon the southern and several of the Derbyshire streams, and the other the "Stone Fly," which is equally plentiful and as deadly a lure upon such rivers as the Yore, Wharfe, and Eden.

The confusion, however, fortunately ends with the same name being applied to them both, for any angler who has seen the two flies cannot possibly mistake them for one another. The Green Drake belongs to the family of the *Ephemeridæ*, and is universally admitted to be the most beautiful of our angling flies, its fairy-like, gauzy wings and graceful spiral body endowing it with a beauty peculiarly its own; on the other hand, the Stone Fly belongs to the *Perlidæ*, and its big flat wings, shapeless body, and sombre colours—

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to say nothing of its heavy, lumbering flight when it does take wing, which is very seldom—renders it a far inferior object to its imperial relative.

The Stone Fly is an aquatic-bred fly, and in its larval condition lives in the water under small stones and gravel at the edges of streams; as such it is known by the name of the "Creeper," and is a most repulsive-looking creature, but, of course, perfectly harmless.

I have witnessed some lively scenes at country inns, caused by some mischievous angler placing a score or so of these creatures in some companion's bed, and certainly, viewed upon the surface of a white sheet, through the medium of a flickering dip-candle, the effect is "creepy" in the extreme. The familiar cookery-book advice, imputed, I believe, to Mrs. Glasse, respecting the capture of your hare before proceeding to cook him, is particularly applicable to the Creeper, substituting the word "bait" for "cook," as they are so nimble that a novice will lift up stone after stone, and although he may discover plenty of the larvæ, about one in ten will be the extent of his captures until he becomes accustomed to the work.

Dick Routledge, the Eden expert, many years ago showed me the easiest method of collecting these strange-looking creatures. Stand at the edge of a stream containing Creepers and hold your landing-net upright in front of you, bow downwards; next disturb the stones with your feet, and the stream washing the larvæ into the meshes, they can easily be picked out and placed in damp moss in a small tin, which can be strapped round the waist.

A fly-rod, somewhat stiff in action, 12 ft. in length, is the best weapon for fishing either the Creeper or Stone Fly, and as you must always fish up-stream, the water cannot be too low or clear; the best time of all is when the Creeper is about to change into the fly, and for that purpose begins to stir abroad, and consequently presents itself to the notice of the ever-watchful trout.

The Creeper and Stone Fly are but little known to southern anglers, just as in Yorkshire the Green Drake is almost as great a stranger. Owing to this fact a rather amusing incident once occurred in which I took a somewhat active part. The scene was on a certain Yorkshire river, to which I had run over for a day's fishing on the Saturday previous to Whitsuntide, knowing from experience that on the Monday and Tuesday the place would be inundated with holiday-makers.

"Good-morning, Mr. W.," said the landlord of the inn as I entered; "I am right glad that you have come to-day."

"How's that?" I asked. "Are the fish taking well?"

"No, it's not on that account; but there have been a couple of

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London gentlemen here for a week, and they have only killed about half a dozen trout. They say now there are very few fish in the river," replied mine host, with an injured air.

"Oh! that's it, is it?" I said. "Well, just make a bet with them —anything you like—that you will show them a dish of trout to-night; for I am certain to kill some to-day with either Creeper or Stone Fly."

The bet was made—dinner and a bottle of wine; but the Southerners had to pay for it, as I weighed in at six o'clock with 13½ lbs. of fine trout, all taken with the baits named. I had a long chat with them afterwards over a second bottle of wine, for they were right jolly fellows, and they acknowledged perfect ignorance of the existence even of such an insect. I explained to them all that I knew on the subject, and no doubt in future seasons they would profit by that single day's experience.

I employ the same tackle for fishing both creeper and fly—viz., three yards of best quality drawn gut, tapering from 1 × to 4 × with a No. 6 Kendal scale, fine wire round bent hook tied on to the end length with yellow silk, the top of the shank being bent slightly outwards. You insert the point of the hook under the thorax, carefully working the bend of the hook round until the point emerges at the bottom of the abdomen, the top of the shank keeping the creeper or fly in position. In the case of the former, if the water is very rough, I affix a single small shot about six inches above the hook. In fishing the edges of streams, or in thin water, this is not needed, or in the case of the Stone Fly.

Some anglers use two small sneck-bend hooks tied one above each other, but I only employ this form of tackle when I find fish after fish suck off the fly without being able to hook them, and it is simply marvellous to witness the manner in which a cunning old trout will sometimes accomplish this feat, especially when you are fishing with the female fly, which is much larger than the male, or Jack, as it is termed. In bright, low water you will see something, more like a shadow than anything, and your fly is gone. If, however, the fish are taking properly, you see them sail up to the fly, gulp it down, and as they turn their heads downwards, just raise your wrist and you have him. The upper portions of the Yore and Wharfe are especially adapted for this style of fishing, broken, rocky streams, full of little pools and miniature cascades, below which the watchful trout is ever on the look-out for prey. Long, thin flats fringed with bushes are also very productive of sport at times; but practice alone can teach the angler where to look for fish under different circumstances and in using various kinds of baits in different seasons of the

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year. I quite agree with Theakstone that the female Stone Fly is a long way better lure than the Jack, and I have *proved* it to be so most conclusively on several occasions. In the season, which commences about April 20 with the Creeper, and ends about the first week in June with the Stone Fly, there is no more exciting phase of sport. I usually commence about five or six o'clock A.M., breakfast nine A.M., then a pipe; start again with small fly, minnow, or worm, according to circumstances; re-commence with Creeper or Stone Fly about three o'clock P.M., and continue with that bait until dark.

A little fresh in the river materially improves your chance of sport with the matured fly, but, as I remarked before, the lower the water the better for creeper-fishing. The local anglers on the Eden are masters of this style of fishing, and a novice can learn a good many wrinkles from such men, whom I have always found very civil and obliging companions on a day on the river.

The late Mr. McNee, of Pitlochry, once sent me a very clever imitation of the Stone Fly, its wings being composed from the scales of a Prussian carp, prepared by Mr. McNee's special process, but since that time I have perfected a fly with a gauze-like wing which cannot possibly be improved upon. For my own part, I always use the natural insect when procurable, but there are times when you cannot obtain one "for love or money," and then the above-named imitation is an excellent substitute.

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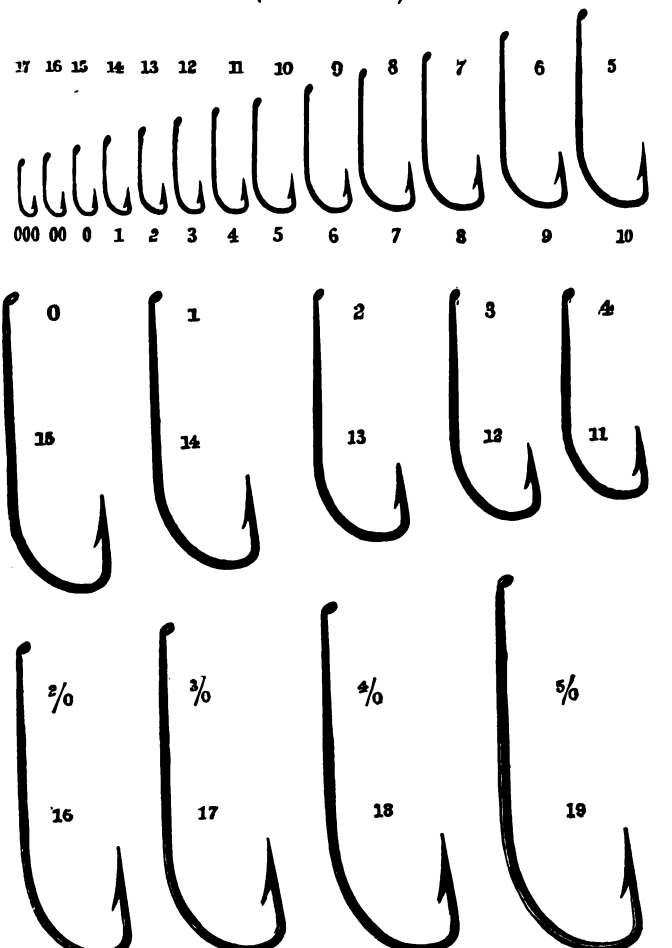

UPPER FIGURES "REDDITCH" SCALE; LOWER FIGURES "NEW" SCALE

This scale of sizes of hooks will be found useful, as the sizes of hooks mentioned in this work are "Redditch" Scale, with the exception of the flies, which are "New" Scale.

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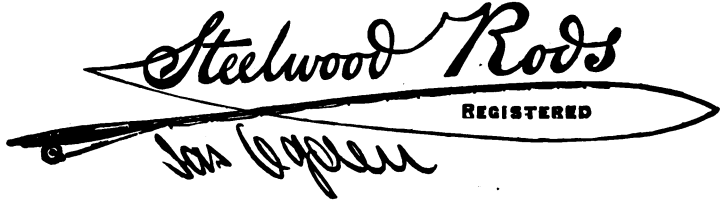

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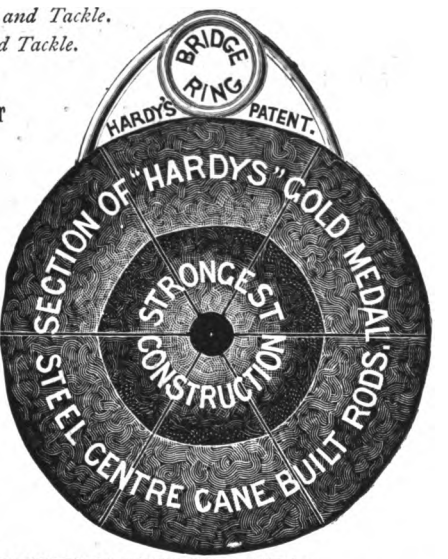

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